"Labour Monthly" Conference (Page 130)

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Editor: R. PALME DUTT

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(1818-1883)

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A

'LABOUR MONTHLY' CONFERENCE

ON

Revolutionary Policy

(following on the Discussion on "Revolutionary Policy" in the "Labour Monthly" from September, 1932, to March, 1933)

will be held on MARCH 19th, 1933, at THE FRIARS' HALL, 237 Blackfriars Road, S.E.1., 11 a.m.—1 p.m., 2—7 p.m.

I.L.P. MEMBERS ARE SPECIALLY INVITED

The questions to be discussed will include :—

(1) In what does I.L.P. revolutionary policy differ from Communist policy ?

(2) Is there a Middle Policy between Labourism and Communism ?

(3) What are the next tasks of revolutionaries in Britain to-day ?

(4) What is the path to the conquest of power ? What is the role of the existing mass struggle in the development of the conquest of power ?

(5) What is revolutionary mass work ? Is the fight for immediate demands reformist ?

(6) On what lines can be developed the revolutionary fight against Imperialist War ?

(7) What must be the role and structure of the revolutionary party of the working class ?

(8) Is unity of the revolutionary working class forces desirable ? How can it best be achieved ?

(9) Can Communists realise their aims outside the Communist International ?

A REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE APRIL "LABOUR MONTHLY"

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THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

VOLUME 15 MARCH, 1933 NUMBER 3

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

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By BOB MCILHONE

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

Marxism Today—Living Marxism—1848 and To-day—The Long Transition—How Marx Built the Socialist Movement —Weaknesses of Old Social Democracy—Marx's Lead to Mass Work—Distortion to Opportunism—Modern Lies and Concealment—Marxist Revolutionary Tactics—Marx's War on Opportunism—Call to Split Social Democracy —Engels' Advice Ignored—Falsification of Engels' Testament—Thirty Years of Falsification—Engels' Dying Anger—The Dance of all the Dirt—Revisionism—Degradation—Effects of 1905 Revolution—1914-18—Engels on War of 1914—Engels on Future Communist International—Since the War—Which Path?—Lessons of the German Revolution—Contrast of German and Russian Revolutions—Britain's "Alternative" to Marxism—The Outcome—Labour Disillusionment — The "Revival" of Marxism—Marxism is Communism

There is an international tendency of the bourgeois theoreticians to kill Marxism by "gentleness," to choke it in their embraces by an apparent acceptance of "all" the "truly scientific," sides and elements of Marxism EXCEPT its "agitational," "demagogic," "Blanqui-like," "Utopian," side. In other words, they take from Marxism all that is acceptable for the liberal bourgeoisie, including the struggle for reforms, including the class struggle (without the dictatorship of the proletariat), including a "general" recognition of "Socialist ideals" and the substitution of a "new order" for capitalism; they repudiate "only" the living soul of Marxism, "only" its revolutionary content.—LENIN

FIFTY years ago Marx died. The whole world to-day is his monument. On the one side, the world crisis of capitalism, working out with merciless exactness the laws that he laid bare to the outcome that he foretold; on the other side, the proletarian revolution, springing, as he foretold, from the crisis of capitalism and building up

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triumphant socialism in the first sector of the earth ; gathering world economic and political conflicts and convulsions, as we are swept forward ever more rapidly to the second cycle of wars and revolutions, opening out the path to the extension and final victory of the world proletarian revolution—the whole world to-day is Marxism in action. Every other theory and world outlook lies in ruins, shattered and impotent before the march of events. The voices of the puny critics and revisers of Marxism are long forgotten. Marxism alone rides the storm, and casts its searchlight in front on the path forward of humanity. The meaning of Marx in human history is only beginning to be understood. Philosophers, prophets, statesmen, system-makers and leaders of action there have been in plenty in every age. But with Marx the whole of human theory and practice entered into a new stage, as decisive in its ultimate significance as the advance from the pre-human stage to the first beginnings of technique and human culture. For the first time the completely conscious understanding and control of the whole range of human life and social development became possible. The full significance of this—Engels' " leap from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom "—will only be finally realised with the victory of the world socialist revolution. To-day the fight of revolutionary Marxism, carried forward in Leninism, the fight of the revolutionary working class, organised in the Communist International, represents this fight for the future in the midst of the chaos of a dissolving civilisation.

IT is the privilege of every one living to-day to be able to take part in this fight at the greatest turning-point of mankind. But in order to take part effectively and most usefully in this fight it is essential to have the necessary equipment and understanding. That necessary equipment and understanding is Marxism. Marxism is the weapon of the fight, of the fight for the liberation of the working class, for the socialist revolution. What is Communism ? asked Engels in his Questions and Answers on Communism. Communism he answered, is " the teaching of the conditions of the liberation

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of the working class." That is the essential concrete content, the decisive task in front, to which the whole of Marxist theory is directed. Marxism is the weapon of this concrete fight in progress, of a fight both theoretical and practical, of what is in the last resort a physical fight of millions of men against the existing régime of violence and exploitation, of civil war, as Marx never failed to make clear. A Marxist is only he who takes his organised part in this fight. There can be no Marxism separate from the mass struggle, from the revolutionary fight. It was never more important to remember this than to-day, when all the bourgeois philosophers and dilettantes, awakened from their slumbers by the thunder of the world crisis, are "discovering" Marxism and trying to make a speculative plaything of it, or when all the opportunists and agents of capitalist servitude in the working class are trying to hide their treachery behind a Marxist cover. It was never more necessary than to-day when the fight is close and urgent, when all the forces of barbarism, of world war more destructive than ever before, of imperialist savagery and anarchy, of Hitlerism and all "the wild asses of the devil" are threatening their supreme attempt to engulf the world and destroy all human culture, and when the sole force of world order and civilisation is the Communist International and the Soviet Union. In words that apply with burning force to the present epoch Marx declared in 1848:

> The cannibalism of the Counter-Revolution will teach the peoples that there is only one means to shorten, to minimise and to concentrate the murderous death-agonies of the old society and the bloody birth-agonies of the new, only one means—Revolutionary Terrorism. (Marx in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of Nov. 6, 1848.)

THE full revolutionary force of Marxism was not yet understood in his own epoch or by the early social democratic parties of the Second International which carried on his work and teaching with many weakenings. Marxism had found itself in the direct revolutionary epoch leading up to 1848, when all the basic contradictions of capitalist society and their political reflection were already laid bare,

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when the passing of the bourgeoisie to counter-revolution, the vacillation and impotence of the petit-bourgeois democracy ("social democracy," as it called itself), and the inevitable transference of revolutionary leadership to the proletariat as the inaugurator of the social revolution, were fully demonstrated, and the whole future epoch of history up to the present day was in its essence disclosed in a flash in those days of struggle to eyes trained to see, as Marx and Engels had trained themselves in the preceding years through every form of historical, philosophical and economic study alongside participation in the movement, to see and to understand the process of events. Thus the combined outcome of the highest development of bourgeois thought, which at that period reached its apex in the German classical philosophy, along with French materialism and English economic theory, and at the same time the beginning of the proletarian movement, of French Socialism and Communism and English Chartism, provided the origins and contributory sources which united, at the critical turning-point of revolutionary struggle, at the turning-point from the declining bourgeois revolution to the nascent proletarian revolution, to produce Marxism, the theory of the future period. The "Communist Manifesto," written at the end of 1847, already contained the essential main outlines of the future.

BUT after 1848 there followed the long period of capitalist expansion, in which the still ascendant capitalism was working out all its possibilities till their final limits and decline, in which the proletariat was slowly gathering its forces, and the revolutionary tempo of 1848 passed into a memory, until in 1871 the Commune lit the torch anew and blazed the light forward on the future proletarian dictatorship. The hopes of Marx and Engels of speedy advance to the proletarian socialist revolution out of the revolutionary struggles of 1848 were doomed to disappointment. The bourgeois revolution was in its essence complete in Europe with 1848, although the formation of the modern bourgeois national states had still to be completed through the political struggles and wars of

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1848–1871 : in this sense the conditions were ripe for the next stage, for the socialist revolution. But the forces of the proletariat were not yet strong enough ; and capitalism in Europe had still a vast sphere of expansion in drawing the whole world into its orbit. Marx was quick to see the consequence of this for the whole future line and tempo of development. In 1858 he posed the question as follows :

> The special task of bourgeois society is the establishment of the world market, at any rate in its main outlines, and of a production upon this basis. Since the world is round, this process appears to have reached its completion with the colonisation of California and Australia and the opening up of China and Japan. *The weighty question for us now is this : On the Continent the revolution is imminent, and will from the first take on a socialist character. But will it not inevitably be crushed in this small corner, since the movement of bourgeois society is still ascendant on a far wider area?*
>
> (Marx, letter to Engels, October 8, 1858.)

The truth of this was abundantly shown by the Commune (which Marx advised against beforehand, but fully supported once the fight was started—in contrast to modern " socialist " leaders of the Second International, who preached revolution in the abstract until revolution came, and have since opposed it) : the Commune laid bare the imminent socialist revolution in Europe, and its necessary form in the dictatorship of the proletariat, but it could not be successful and was inevitably crushed, since on a world scale capitalism was still ascending.

IN consequence the essential task during the second half of the nineteenth century was the gathering of the forces of the proletariat, the spreading among them of the principles of Marxism, of the socialist revolution, and the training in daily warfare against capitalism over immediate demands. This is the task to which Marx set himself and accomplished through the First International (1864–1876), laying down the foundations of the movements throughout Europe, and subsequently through direct guidance of the developing social-democratic parties in the leading countries in Europe, by Marx and Engels until the death of Marx in 1883, and by Engels until his death in 1895. In the battles

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against the petit-bourgeois socialism of Proudhon, against the reformism of the British trade unions, against the national state socialism of Lassalle, and against the anti-centralist and conspirative anarchism of Bakunin, Marxism established itself as the theory of the rising proletariat, of the socialist revolution. The socialist movement in Europe and throughout the world grew up in the last decades of the nineteenth century on the basis of Marxism. At the close of the First International in 1873 Engels could write :

> I think that the next International, after Marx's writings have exercised their influence for a few years more, will be directly Communist, and will be definitely devoted to the diffusion of our principles. (Engels, letter to Sorge, September 27, 1873.)

These hopes were not to be as rapidly fulfilled as then seemed likely. The Second International, which grew up in 1889, proclaimed the basis of Marxism, and represented an enormous advance in organised strength on the First ; nevertheless it did not attain full political clearness of programme, contained heavy weaknesses, and even marked a setback in respect of national separatism and decentralisation as compared with the First International. It was not until 1919, after the purging experience of war and of a new revolutionary epoch, that the Communist International, to which Engels looked forward, could be established.

THE social-democratic parties which grew up in the last quarter of the nineteenth century based themselves upon Marxism in principles, programme and tactics. Nevertheless, the revolutionary edge was blunted by the conditions of the epoch, by the predominantly peaceful, legal mass-organising, trade union and parliamentary work which was the necessary path of advance, and by the expansion of capitalism and even apparent improvement of conditions of a section of the workers, based in reality upon intensified world exploitation. The revolutionary aims and principles were repeated as a shibboleth ; but the daily organising work and daily fight for reforms became more and more the whole

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aim in practice. In the words of Lenin ("Answer to the I.L.P."):

> In the long process of the peaceful development of capitalism, the object of this preliminary struggle, of this organising period of struggle was forgotten, the aim having become in the eyes of most of the leaders of the working class, and of a considerable number of the workers themselves, largely an aim in itself instead of a means.

Only a minority of the most far-sighted, the Marxist left in the old Second International, maintained the line of revolutionary Marxism, and were able to see through the outward peaceful surface of this period of transition to the approaching crisis of capitalism and decisive battles.

THE lead of Marx and Engels in the second half of the nineteenth century to the task of preparatory work for future revolutionary struggles, to organising work, to the daily struggle, to mass work, to the building of legal parties and trade unions, was misunderstood and distorted and falsified under the conditions of capitalist corruption and in the imperialist period to opportunism. Lenin has explained with complete clearness in the passage already quoted the lead actually given:

> When after the failure of the revolution of '48, capitalism entered upon a period of further development, spreading and gaining new strength every day; when the idea of the direct seizure of power proved erroneous, Marx and Engels, boldly confronting the facts indicated a method of preparing the working class for its future decisive revolutionary battles for power.
>
> They pointed out to the working class that capitalism affords it the possibility of organisation and union, that it gives the advanced section of the working class the possibility of exercising its influence upon the backward sections, infusing into them the consciousness of class solidarity of all the oppressed; they demanded from the class-conscious workers that they should, without waiting for the final and decisive battle, utilise every possibility which had been forced from the capitalists for the establishment of legal open Workers' Parties and for the organisation of Trade Unions, being guided by the principle that the working class will be able to utilise every capitalist crisis with the greater facility, the greater its unity, organisation and class consciousness will be.

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> They called upon the workers to fight for universal suffrage and democracy, in order that the masses might be able from the parliamentary tribune to tear the mask from every capitalist deceit, proving to the worker how every kind of transaction between the various sections of capitalism is made at the expense of the working class. They called upon the workers to make use of the conflicts arising between the various sections of the capitalist class in order to secure economic and social reforms which would tend to ameliorate the position of the working class, to strengthen it and afford it an opportunity of making progress in its struggle against capitalism.
>
> They called upon the working masses directly to take part in politics and to exercise direct pressure upon the bourgeoisie. *They appealed to the working class never to forget that all this struggle for democracy, that all this struggle for reform, is only preparatory work whose aim is to strengthen the organisation and class consciousness of the workers, and to prepare them for the epoch of decisive battles with capitalism* which is being torn by inner contradictions, by capitalism which will no longer be able to keep the masses in hand, but will on the contrary provoke revolutionary uprisings against itself.

It was in relation to this lead that " in the long process of the peaceful development of capitalism the object of this preliminary struggle, of this organising period of struggle, was forgotten."

IT is important to give this compact statement of the Marxist lead with regard to mass work and the daily struggle in the pre-revolutionary period at length, because it is just here, in the incorrect understanding of this, that lies the first root of the distortion and falsification of Marxism, which finally blossoms out into open treachery and passage to the bourgeoisie. It is on the direct misinterpretation of this whole line of revolutionary mass work and the mass struggle that the mountain of attempts of opportunism to find its justification in Marx base themselves (*e.g.*, the question of the significance of the Ten-Hour Day). All the conventional bourgeois and social-reformist pictures of Marx and Marxism invariably try to conceal its revolutionary character, and to present Marx as " opportunist " or at any rate as " inconsistent," " partly revolutionary, partly opportunist,"

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" curious dualism," " inclining to a maturer, reformist view in his older years " and similar idiocies. This nonsense, which would not survive the shortest serious consistent study of Marx's line, reveals only equal ignorance of the elements of dialectics and of revolutionary tactics.

THUS the old-time " standard " English " Life of Marx " by Spargo (the subsequent war-time jingo-socialist), pours out this kind of stuff for the benefit of innocent readers :

> Marx was, in fact, a good deal of an opportunist, and of the two wings of the present-day Socialist movement, popularly denoted as " Opportunist " and " Impossibilist " respectively, the former is much more truly Marxian than the latter, at least in its fundamental principles. . . .
>
> . . . The Marx of this later period was in many important respects a very different person from the Marx of 1848 . . . his thought was more mature, and his political wisdom had greatly ripened. Socialism on its practical political side must conform to the thought of this later period, not to the youthful and immature expressions of the Communist Manifesto, if it would claim the sanction of Marx's maturest thought. The sagacity and practical statesmanship . . . contrast in a most striking manner with some of the expressions of a raw crude radicalism which Marx manifested in his youth, but learnt to regard with contempt.

This kind of filthy caricature, which would not survive half-an-hour's confrontation with Marx's actual writings, has been peddled round for decades by the opportunist falsifiers of Marx : and, let it be noted, right up to the war this was the only available Life of Marx for English readers, while at the same time a serious Life, such as that of Mehring, remained (and still remains) untranslated, and the great part of Marx's writings have been kept from the English workers. On such a basis, using in fact the bourgeois dictatorship and monopoly of publishing to conceal the truth (and not one of the university presses with their enormous resources and facilities for research doing anything whatever to make available any work of Marx or any information about him, but instead circulating through the university professorial ignoramuses still grosser stupider lies), the opportunist falsification

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of Marxism has been kept up in England and America, until to-day Leninism and the Communist International has taken up the fight and begun to make something more of the writings available, and to compel a more serious treatment of Marxism from its enemies.

MARX less revolutionary in his old age! Marx disclaiming "the youthful and immature expressions of the Communist Manifesto," "a raw crude radicalism which Marx manifested in his youth, but learnt to regard with contempt"! What dirty lies! It was just in 1871 that Marx was drawing the lesson from the Commune that his previous declarations on the necessity to "seize the machinery of the State" did not go far enough, and that it was necessary "not merely to take over, from one set of hands to another, the bureaucratic and military machine, but to shatter it," and that this, as he made clear in the 1872 Preface, was the sole correction of principle needing to be made to the Communist Manifesto. In the 1872 Preface, Marx and Engels explicitly declared:

> Though conditions have changed in the course of the twenty-five years since the Manifesto was written, yet the general principles expounded in the document are on the whole as correct to-day as ever.

Only the immediate measures set out in the second section (graduated income tax, &c.—which measures, incidentally, another precious "Marxist" falsifier, Woodburn, theorist of the Plebs anti-Marxist Labour Colleges, has the impudence to quote to-day as proof that "Marx's Programme" is practically identical with the Labour Party Programme! see "Would Marx Have Joined the Labour Party?" by A. Woodburn in *Forward*, September 3, 1932) are explicitly stated by Marx in 1872 to be "out-of-date." And it was in 1875 that Marx wrote his scorching "Critique of the Gotha Programme," which ridiculed the opportunist Lassallean confusions of this unification programme of the German Social Democracy in the light of revolutionary theory, including

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the famous exposure of the whole conception of the " Volkstaat " or Popular Democratic State, and the clearest exposition of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the which criticism was withheld from publication by the Social-Democratic Party leadership for sixteen years, and even then only issued, as has since been revealed, under heavy pressure from Engels (and thereafter left buried in the " Neue Zeit," and actually not republished in Germany till 1920).

MARX in fact was already in his closing years, in the late seventies and early eighties, at full war with the rising opportunist tendencies he discerned in German Social-Democracy. His letters of the closing years reveal a continuous merciless criticism of these tendencies, and even of the two leaders closest to Marxism, Bebel and Liebknecht, for their failure to fight them. So in 1877 he wrote :

> In Germany in our party there is a spirit of rottenness revealing itself, not so much among the masses, as among the leaders. The compromise with the Lassalleans has led to compromise also with other half-way types, with Dühring and his admirers, and with a whole crew of half-ripe scholastics and super-wise doctors who want to give to Socialism a " higher ideal " orientation, *i.e.*, to replace its materialist basis (which requires serious objective study for any one to be able to use it) with a whole modern mythology of goddesses of Justice, Freedom, Equality and Fraternity. Dr. Höchberg, who publishes the *Zukunft* is a representative of this tendency, and has " bought his way in " to the Party—I recognise with the " noblest " intentions, but I do not care a button for " intentions."
>
> (Marx to Sorge, October 19, 1877.)

This bankers' son, Höchberg, whose group Marx here attacks, had for his secretary, Bernstein, the future " reviser " of Marxism : the tendency of this group Marx was already thus in 1877 denouncing in the strongest language as a menace to the party. And again in 1879 :

> Liebknecht, after his blunder in the negotiations with the Lassalleans, has now opened the door wide to all these half-men, and in spite of himself has prepared a demoralisation in the Party, which could only be conquered through the Socialist Law.
>
> (Marx to Sorge, September 19, 1879)

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IN fact, as Marx and Engels soon found reason to complain, the effect of Bismarck's Anti-Socialist Law was the opposite to their hopes, and did not purge the party. While it steeled and strengthened the working masses in the party, it facilitated the rising influence of the opportunists in the leading circles, since these were conducting the legal press in Germany and were able to strengthen their hold on the machine, while the best fighting leaders were in exile. In 1883 Engels writes (letter to Bernstein, February 25, 1883) of "the petit-bourgeois philistine temper in the party with which we have always been violently at war." *By* 1884 *Engels very seriously discussed the necessity of a split in German Social-Democracy on basic questions of programme against the opportunist tendencies;* he only advocated the necessity of waiting with the split until the repeal of the Anti-Socialist Law, as until then the opportunist tendencies might be able to secure the majority (letter to Bernstein, June 5, 1884—these letters, it may be noted, Bernstein only published in 1925, after, as he admits in his preface, publication in Russia compelled him at last also to publish). In 1887, in the Preface to his pamphlet on the Housing Question, Engels speaks openly of the existence of "petit-bourgeois socialism" within the German Social Democratic Party, "including in the Reichstag fraction." In 1891 Engels' strong critique of the draft Erfurt Programme dealt specifically with opportunism and "the way opportunism is gaining ground in the Social-Democratic press":

> What else can result from this than that the party may suddenly, at the first critical moment, prove helpless, that on decisive questions confusion and division will arise within the party because these questions had never been discussed?
>
> The neglect of great fundamental considerations for the sake of the momentary interests of the day, this chase after momentary successes, and this race after them without account of ultimate results, this sacrifice of the future movements for the present, is perhaps the result of "honest" motives, but is and remains none the less opportunism, and "honest" opportunism is perhaps more dangerous than any other.

This critique, sent from Engels to Kautsky in 1891, was withheld from publication until ten years later.

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THUS already in the first years of the imperialist epoch Marx and Engels, then in the closing period of their lives, were in full war against the growing opportunist tendencies of Social-Democracy, and already even beginning to sound the direct call to the necessity of the future split against opportunism. Had the advice of Engels been taken in time, the consequence for the whole future of international socialism would have been incalculable ; Revolutionary Social-Democracy would have been steeled and ready to meet the period of imperialism in the spirit of Marx and Engels, in the spirit of Bolshevism ; 1914 would have told a different story. But the advice of Engels was not taken, save in one country only, in Russia, where the split against opportunism was carried out in time, and in consequence the party of Marxism was ready when the revolutionary crisis came. In German Social-Democracy, the leader of world Social-Democracy, the split for which Engels called was not carried out until thirty-four years later, after corruption had done its work, after the world crisis had begun, after the revolutionary struggles had begun. Hence all the painful travails of the present period, of the workers' movement having to struggle from a late start, and in the face of the entrenchments of a powerful opportunist machine, to overtake the headlong process of history and of the capitalist breakdown.

IN place of the line of Marx and Engels, Social-Democracy inevitably moved to the only alternative, to suppressing the line of Marx and Engels. This is the ugly reality which revealed itself already in the closing months of Engels' life. In 1895 Engels wrote his last work, the famous Preface to Marx's *Class Struggles in France.* This Preface is dated March 6, 1895. Engels died on August 5, 1895. In this, his last writing for the international working class, Engels sketched out with a masterly hand the future of the revolutionary struggle, the gradual massing of the workers' battalions under the cover of legality, leading up to the final armed struggle and the conquest of power. The Social-Democratic leadership, confronted with this Preface, carefully suppressed every

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single revolutionary passage in it, every sentence and paragraph referring to the future armed struggle, and then published it as a vindication of legality as the only future method. The meaning of the Preface was turned into the exact reverse of what Engels wrote (see the LABOUR MONTHLY for January, 1933, p. 49, for two of the principal suppressed passages quoted in T. H. Wintringham's "Modern Weapons and Revolution"; the full text is in the Russian Marx-Engels Archiv No. 1.) In this mutilated form it has been circulated by Social-Democracy in every country in the world as the "proof" that Marxism finally abandoned the conception of violent revolution as out of date. It was not until 1924, that is, after this lie had done its work for thirty years, that the true text was at last discovered and made known to the world through the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow.

THE effect of this veritable Ems forgery at the root of Social-Democracy cannot easily be measured (up to 1924 it was still in full circulation, also in England and America, as the "repudiation" of Bolshevik methods by Engels). The Preface in its falsified form was circulated as the "Political Testament of Engels," and at the critical point of the advancing imperialist epoch opened the full flood-gates to opportunist legalism. Bernstein made this falsified Preface of Engels the entire basis and starting-point of his Revisionist campaign (see his "Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus," translated in English under the title "Evolutionary Socialism," which constantly refers back to this Preface as his justification). The opposition of the Left was paralysed. The combined revolutionary and also military authority of Engels was too great to be contradicted. The effect can be traced through the whole utterances and line of the Marxist Left in German Social-Democracy, in the lack of clearness and certainty on the question of the state, and on the meaning of the conquest of power, in the confinement of the attempt to raise the revolutionary issue on the question of the mass strike, &c. Even a Rosa Luxemburg could declare, in the midst of

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her sharp controversy against Bernstein and the opportunists (at the Stuttgart Congress, 1898):

> The only violent means which can lead us to victory is the socialist enlightenment of the working class in the everyday struggle.

And even as late as 1918, at the Foundation Congress of the German Communist Party, Luxemburg could still declare, referring to the Engels' Preface without awareness of its falsification:

> I will not say that Engels, by this Preface, made himself a sharer in the guilt for the whole line of development in Germany; I will only say: Here is a classic document for the conception which was living in German Social-Democracy, or rather, which killed it.

The courage, clear-sightedness and tenacity of Lenin and the Bolsheviks in maintaining the line of revolutionary Marxism and of the armed revolution in the face of such "authoritative" falsification stands out all the more powerfully, to an extent that is not to-day easy to realise, when all these questions have now been fully cleared in principle thanks to their work.

ENGELS' fury at the falsification was extreme. Although in his last illness, he wrote at once to Kaustky (April 1, 1895):

> To my amazement I see to-day in *Vorwärts* an extract from my Preface printed without my previous knowledge, and chopped up in such a fashion that I am made to appear a pacific worshipper of legality at any price. All the more I desire that the Preface be printed without abbreviation in the *Neue Zeit*, in order that this *shameful impression* shall be wiped out. I shall express my opinion very emphatically on this to Liebknecht, and also to those, whoever they may be, who have given him this opportunity to misrepresent my views. (Italics in the original.)

And on April 3 he wrote to Lafargue:

> X. has played me a dirty trick. He has taken from my Preface to Marx's articles on France, 1848-1850, everything that he considered useful for the defence of tactics of *peacefulness at any price and avoidance of violence*, which he is for some time now loving to preach, especially at the present moment, when exceptional laws are being prepared in Berlin; whereas I recommend such tactics purely and solely for *present-day Germany*, and *then only with essential reservations*. In France, Belgium, Italy and Austria, these tactics, taken as a whole, cannot be followed, and in Germany they can become inapplicable to-morrow. (Italics in the original.)

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Such was Engels' opinion on the falsification which became for thirty years the Bible of Revisionism and "Evolutionary Socialism." But his protest availed nothing. Death came to the rescue of the opportunists. He died on August 5 without having been able to secure the correction of the "shameful" "misrepresentation" of his basic views by the leaders of Social-Democracy; and it needed the first proletarian revolution to obtain the first publication of the truth.

WITH this symbolic direct distortion of Marxism by the leaders of Social-Democracy the new period began. Marx and Engels were dead. The full imperialist epoch set in. The last work of Marx, the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, was, as we have seen, withheld from publication for sixteen years and then only published under the strong pressure of Engels. The last work of Engels, the Preface to the *Class Struggles in France*, was directly falsified to produce an exactly opposite and counter-revolutionary meaning. The voices of Marx and Engels were silenced; the succeeding leaders of the movement, of Social-Democracy, were not strong enough to carry on their work, were even assisting to conceal and distort the teaching of Marxism, at first half-consciously through "honest" opportunism (in Engels' words), later, more and more consciously, until 1914 laid bare the fruit in open treachery; and thereafter the whole and open rôle of Social-Democracy becomes to slander and distort Marxism by gross, dishonest, deliberate misrepresentation. The revolutionary Left in the old Second International were still finding themselves. Imperialism was able to find the path open for it in the working class movement, to divide the workers, to buy off sections with concessions, to bribe and corrupt the leadership. Revisionism, Fabianism, Progressiveism, Liberal-Labourism, Evolutionary Socialism, all rose to the surface upon this basis of social corruption, expressing it into political systems, and had their short-lived day. "The dance of all the dirt began."

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REVISIONISM was seen in its time as an ideological and political controversy of doctrines and tactics. To-day we can see it more simply as an expression of the period of imperialism leading up to the war (when it could still appear to philistines and idiots as "progressive," "liberal," expanding "social reforms," and even "pacific") and of certain social strata (mainly petit-bourgeois professional, civil servants, sections of the aristocracy of labour) closely connected with the process of imperialist corruption, and temporarily riding on the wave. The supposed "theories," which were once so solemnly discussed, and have long since disappeared into the waste-paper basket under the merciless disproof of facts—the denial of the concentration of capital, the imagined diminution of crises, the harmonising of the contradictions of capitalism, the reconciliation of classes, the improvement of the condition of the masses, the democratising of the state, &c.—can now be conspicuously seen as the short-sighted illusions of a temporary phase and of special strata. Twenty, thirty and forty years ago the Fabians and progressives could still endeavour to speak patronisingly and pityingly of Marx as "obsolete," as not understanding modern progress, and of the Marxists as "revolutionary romantics," &c. To-day their tune is changed to a general fit of the blues and self-doubting. It is their own writings and theories that have become musty and forgotten, and bear already an antiquated and parochial air. The world war shattered their little house of cards and revealed Marxism anew as the science of world realities.

NOT Revisionism itself was so important as the general situation of the working class movement revealed in an extreme form in the diseased growths of Revisionism, Fabianism, &c. By the beginning of the twentieth century the process of adaptation to capitalism was already setting in strongly throughout Social-Democracy. It was not merely in England that such an open anti-Marxist party as the Independent Labour Party could declare:

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> Fortunately, "revolution" in this country has ceased to be anything more than an affected phrase.
>
> (I.L.P. *Monthly News*, January, 1899.)

The same process was in reality going on in the "Marxist" Socialist Parties in France and even in Germany. The leader of French Socialism, Jaurès, the would-be conciliator of Marxism and bourgeois philosophy, could declare:

> In a democracy, in a Republic where there is universal suffrage, the State is not for the proletarians a refractory, hard, absolutely impermeable and impenetrable block. Penetration has begun already. . . . All act on each other, and henceforth the State is penetrated in part by the force of Socialism and the proletariat. . . .
>
> Henceforth Socialism must guard its part of the country's general interests—those of freedom, security and prosperity.
>
> (Jaurès at the Bordeaux Congress of the French Socialist Party, 1903.)

Here sounds already 1914. In Germany the form of Marxism was maintained against a Bernstein, but not the reality; and Bebel could declare, when challenged with the line of the Communist Manifesto:

> The Communist Manifesto has been appealed to. I affirm that already in 1872 Engels in concert with Karl Marx declared that they wished to re-publish it only as a historical document. (Bebel at the Lübeck Congress of the German Social-Democratic Party, 1901.)

Behind the form of Marxist phrases, opportunism won all along the line, as shown especially in the trade union question, in the colonial question, in the war question, &c. (Bebel's affirmation of patriotism in a future war and opposition to any action likely to endanger the party organisation).

BY 1908 the Preface of Fabian Essays re-issued in that year could boast:

> Since 1889 the Socialist movement has been completely transformed throughout Europe; and the result of the transformation may fairly be described as Fabian Socialism. In the eighteen-eighties, when Socialism revived in England for the first time since the suppression of the Paris Commune in 1871, it was not at first realised that what had really been suppressed for good and all was the romantic revolutionary Liberalism and Radicalism of 1848, to which the Socialists had attached themselves as a matter of course . . . ., &c., &c.

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This pompous nonsense (the cock-a-hoop tone of these slavish parasites of capitalism in 1908, after the suppression of the Russian Revolution had confirmed them in the belief in the suppression of all future revolutions, may be usefully compared with the complete dejection of tone of the 1931 Preface, in face of the bankruptcy of Fabianism and capitalism, and triumph of the Russian Revolution) was in fact not only profoundly inaccurate—the fly boasting it had moved the wheel of imperialism—but also already by then out-of date for the real movement of forces. The thunder of the First Russian Revolution had already begun to re-awaken the proletarian forces throughout the world. The left elements were gathering around the fight on the mass strike. The negative sides of imperialism were revealing themselves ever more sharply, the growing burdens on the workers, the gathering crisis and contradictions, the drive to war. New waves of working class unrest were spreading. But these were taking confused, sporadic, theoretically helpless, anarchic forms, owing to the failure of leadership of Social-Democracy. The leadership of Revolutionary Marxism was lacking to draw together the rising workers' struggle and give it political form. There was only parliamentarism on one side, and scattered tendencies of struggle and syndicalist confusion on the other, in Western Europe. On this situation of the working class movement, cut off from its life, from Marxism, there broke inevitably, like a bolt from the unknown instead of as the long-awaited and prepared-for decisive clash, the blow and collapse of 1914.

UNLIKE the pigmies who were "completely transforming" European Socialism along the lines of liberal-reformist myopia and imperialist servility in those critical decades before the war, Engels already a quarter of a century before the world war was anxiously and systematically working out its probable main outlines and revolutionary significance. In 1888 he wrote to Liebknecht:

> How things will turn out when it actually comes to war it is impossible to forsee. Attempts will no doubt be made to make it

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> a sham war, but that will not be so easy. If things turn out as we would like it, and this is very probable, then it will be a war of positions with varied success on the French frontier, a war of attack leading to the capture of the Polish fortresses on the Russian frontier, and a revolution in Petersburg, which will at once make the gentlemen who are conducting the war see everything in an entirely different light. One thing is certain: there will be no more quick decisions and triumphal marches either to Berlin or Paris.
>
> (Engels to W. Liebknecht, February 23, 1888.)

The remarkable closeness of this 1888 forecast to the essential character of the war of 1914-18 (a war of positions on the Western Front; German advance through Poland in the East; no quick decisions or triumphal marches on Berlin or Paris; revolution in Petersburg transforming the whole situation) is a striking testimony to the power of Marxist penetration. (As a matter of military interest it may be noted that on another occasion Engels worked out the most probable line of the German advance through Belgium, disregarding the Neutrality Treaty as a "scrap of paper"—Engels' words—and that the German advance on Paris would probably be halted at the Marne. However, we are for the present concerned only with the political significance of Engels' line on the world war).

IN a further article in 1891 (reprinted in the LABOUR MONTHLY for August, 1931), Engels worked out the revolutionary significance of such a war. He laid down the line for the defeat of every capitalist government in such a war, which Lenin was later to work out in practice:

> No Socialist, whatever his nationality, can desire the triumph in war either of the present German Government or of the French bourgeois republic and least of all of the Tsar which would be equivalent to the enslavement of Europe.

"The socialists in all countries," he declares, "are for peace," since peace means certainty of victory within a measurable time, whereas "war brings either victory in two or three years or complete ruination for at least fifteen to twenty years." But "if, nevertheless, war comes, then one thing is certain":

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> *This war, where fifteen and twenty million armed men would slaughter one another and lay waste Europe as never before, this war must either bring about the immediate victory of Socialism, or so shatter the old order of things from top to bottom, and leave behind such a heap of ruins, that the old capitalist society will become more impossible than ever before, and the social revolution, though it might be set back for ten or fifteen years, would, however, in this case also have to conquer and in so much the more speedy and thorough fashion.*

Of these two alternatives consequent of the world war, the first, the " immediate victory of Socialism," " victory in two or three years," was offered by the Russian Revolution, followed by the revolutions in Central Europe; but Social-Democracy was able to hold the workers outside Russia back and secure the restoration of capitalism. Therefore we are faced with the second, with the " heap of ruins," with " the old capitalist society " that has " become more impossible than ever before," and the necessary painful interval (estimated by him at " ten or fifteen years "—in fact longer, because he did not calculate on the full measure of betrayal by Social-Democracy) to the renewed revolutionary situation, which is likely in fact to be connected with renewed world war.

BUT Engels went further in his working out of the consequences of the future European war for the socialist movement, and just this is of especial importance to-day. He saw sharply the weaknesses of the existing Social-Democracy, and he saw in the future European war the instrument that would destroy it and mean a heavy setback to the movement. But he saw at the same time that out of this situation would arise a new revolutionary party which would carry on the fight, freed from the weaknesses of the old.

> A European war means the death of the present German Social-Democratic Party. . . . Such a war would be our greatest misfortune, it could throw back the movement twenty years. *But the new Party that must inevitably in the end arise from these conditions would in all the countries of Europe be free from a host of vacillations and pettinesses which to-day hem in our movement on every side.* (Engels, letter to Bebel, December 16, 1879, quoted in Bebel *Aus Meinem Leben*, III. p. 85.)

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This prophetic leap of Engels carries the line of development straight from Marx and Engels to the Communist International. *The war did in truth, as Engels foresaw, mean the "death" of the old German Social-Democracy. But from the ruins, as Engels also foresaw, has arisen "the new Party" of revolutionary Marxism, on an international scale ("in all the countries of Europe"), fighting opportunism ("free from a host of vacillations and pettiness which to-day hem in our movement"), fighting without reserve along the full line of Communism, that is, the line of Marx and Engels—the Communist International.* This is the most important lesson for every one on this Marxist anniversary.

TO-DAY, nearly two decades have passed since the great watershed of 1914. Eighteen and a half years of struggle and experience, of revolution and counter-revolution, of capitalist crisis, have taught in letters of fire the meaning of the two paths, have taught anew the lessons of Marxism. No longer in argument and doctrinal strife, as before the war, but in experience in the lives of the working class has been shown where the two paths lead, the path of the Second International, of the betrayal of Marxism, and the path of the Communist International, of Marxism. What began as opportunism (when Marx and Engels already gave the advice to lop the branch and save the tree, but their advice was not taken), what reached its full fruit in 1914 as social-patriotism and the betrayal of the revolution for open service to the capitalist state, has continued into the epoch of the proletarian revolution as the strangler of the workers' struggle and the builder of the basis and conditions for Fascism. What began as the fight of the revolutionary left in the old pre-war Second International against the revision and distortion of Marxism, and for the line of revolutionary mass struggle, has developed into the first proletarian revolution over one-sixth of the earth, and is now marshalling the forces of the workers throughout the world for the final struggle and the final victory of the world proletarian revolution. The line

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of development has gone far since the old Communist Manifesto of 1848, first laid out the line of the battle in front and of the future course of history. Nevertheless in the broadest sense we are still in the stage of history which the old Communist Manifesto opened, in the stage of the transition from the bourgeois revolution to the world proletarian revolution; and therefore the basic principles of the Communist Manifesto are still valid for our own time, developed by the whole subsequent experience of Marx and Engels, developed by the experience of Lenin and Bolshevism, of imperialism and the first proletarian revolution, of the whole further unfolding of capitalism and the workers' struggle up to the present day.

WHERE to-day have all the movements that have abandoned Marxism, that have abandoned the Communism of Marx and Engels, the majority movements of post-war Social-Democracy and Labourism, where have they brought the working class? In every country where they have dominated, they have brought the working class to a pitch of weakness and defeat, of misery and worsening of conditions, of staggering under the blows of a daily more aggressive world reaction, without parallel for half-a-century. In Italy, to the victory of Fascism. In Germany, where fifteen years ago the workers held all in their hands, the Counter-Revolution has been put back in the saddle by the help of Social-Democracy, and the workers' movement is left at the mercy of the murder-bands of Hitler. In Britain, where millions and millions of workers listened hopefully to the call of Labourism, put Labour Governments in office, came out on the General Strike, to-day the capitalist offensive throws all the burdens of the crisis upon the workers, reaction reigns in the form of the National Government, and the leaders of the Labour Party cynically throw off the professions of allegiance to the movement they no longer need, and join the National Government, leaving demoralisation behind. Only in the country where Communism, where the line of Marx and Engels has been followed, only there the workers

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have conquered the bourgeoisie, smashed the counter-revolution, established their power unshakeably and advance in the triumphs of building up socialism. That is the lesson of these eighteen and a half years since the outbreak of the war, to which the workers' movement throughout the world is awakening. *Marxism, Communism, is the lifeblood of the working class movement. Cut off from Marxism, the working class movement perishes and goes down in defeat.*

LOOK at Germany. Fifteen years ago the German workers held all power in their hands. Kautsky wrote with truth in 1931 :

> In November, 1918, the Revolution was the work of the proletariat alone. The proletariat won so all-powerful a position that the bourgeois elements, to begin with, did not dare to attempt any resistance. (Kautsky : Preface to the 3rd edition of *The Proletarian Revolution*, 1931.)

That was fifteen years ago. What have the leaders of Social-Democracy done with that power which the German workers won by their sacrifice and their blood and hopefully entrusted to their hands, to the hands of the leaders of Majority Social-Democracy and Independent Social-Democracy, as Commissars on behalf of the workers' and soldiers' councils for the fulfilment of the revolution ? The leaders of Social-Democracy gave the power back into the hands of the bourgeoisie. In the name of " democracy " they gave the power back to the bourgeoisie. In the name of " democracy " they dissolved the workers' councils. In the name of " democracy " they disarmed the proletariat. In the name of " democracy " they armed the White Guards and the officers' corps, to shoot down the workers and the workers' leaders, Liebknecht and Luxemburg. In the name of " democracy " they came as ever more humble suppliants and junior partners to share in " coalition " a fragment of the power they had themselves given the bourgeoisie and administer for capitalism, until at last the bourgeoisie kicked them out as no longer necessary. Marx had written :

> Between the Capitalist and the Communist social order lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other.

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> To this there would correspond a political period of transition, when the State could be nothing else than the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. (Marx: *Critique of the Gotha Programme.*)

But Kautsky wrote:

> Between the time when the democratic state has a purely middle class government and the time when it has a purely Labour Government extends a period when the one is being transformed into the other. To this a political period of transition would correspond when the Government would assume generally the form of a coalition. (Kautsky: *Die Proletarische Revolution*, published in English as *The Labour Revolution*, p. 45.)

TO-DAY we can see where this "correction" of Marxism in the interests of the bourgeois régime has led. Step by step all the gains of the revolution have been thrown away. Step by step Social-Democracy has helped the bourgeoisie to consolidate its power. And to-day at last, the process completed, even the shell of "democracy," for which all was sacrificed, is thrown aside, and the open face of Fascism confronts the workers. This is where the path of the Second International has led. The workers are faced with the most desperate struggle in their history for the barest existence of the movement, against the menace of counter-revolution, against the menace of world counter-revolution, against the menace of world counter-revolutionary war. The examples of the Russian Revolution and of the German Revolution over these fifteen years teach the workers of the world on a giant scale how a workers' revolution can conquer and how a workers' revolution can be laid in the dust. The issues to-day confronting the workers throughout the world are the most serious since the war.

TURN to Britain. With what confidence Labourism and Fabianism and I.L.P.ism turned on their "alternative" path to Marxism? The line of Marxism, the line of the class struggle, the line of the workers' revolution, was "obsolete" and "out of touch with modern realities." They called the workers to the path of "peaceful democratic advance," of reformist parliamentarism, as the sure path to

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Socialism. The overthrow of Marxism—this was the great work of Fabianism, declares Pease in his official *History of the Fabian Society* (1916) :

> Its first achievement was to break the spell of Marxism in England. . . . The Fabian Society freed English Socialism from this intellectual bondage, and freed it sooner and more completely than Revisionists have succeeded in doing anywhere else.

In its place they set up the basis of the bourgeois Labour movement :

> It accepted economic science as taught by the accredited British professors ; it built up the edifice of Socialism on the foundations of our existing political and social institutions.

i.e., on the foundations of capitalism. So MacDonald corrects the " errors " of Marxism in relation to Britain :

> But the England of 1844 did not break out into revolt ; Chartism did not develop into Socialism. The logical conclusion was not the line of advance. The class-war created trade unionism ; the working classes became citizens ; law, morality, the force of combination lifted to some extent the pall of darkness which hung over the land. The Marxian to-day still wonders why England fell from grace. England did not fall from grace. Neither Marx nor Engels saw deep enough to discover the possibilities of peaceful advance which lay hidden beneath the surface.
>
> (MacDonald : *Socialism and Society*, 1905.)

Thus MacDonald " correcting " Marx from his profound understanding of the real " peaceful " line of capitalist development. Or again, Wells :

> The Marxist presents dramatically what, after all, may come methodically and unromantically, a revolution as orderly and quiet as the procession of the equinoxes. There may be a concentration of capital and a relative impoverishment of the general working mass of peoples, for example, and yet a general advance in the world's prosperity and a growing sense of social duty in the owners of capital and land may do much to mask this antagonism of class interests and ameliorate its miseries. Moreover, this antagonism itself may in the end find adequate expression through temperate discussion, and the class-war come disguised beyond recognition, with hates mitigated by charity and swords beaten into pens, a mere constructive conference between two classes of fairly well-intentioned albeit perhaps still biassed men and women.
>
> (Wells : *New Worlds for Old*, 1908.)

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Such was the outlook and understanding of world tendencies from the basis of which these petty philistines " corrected " Marxism and built up the "Labourist " (bourgeois reformist) ideology. (Needless to say, the same " pacific " Wells turned into a servile tool of the War Office during the war, and in 1918 was demanding that the " little beast " of a Bolshevik, Lenin, " ought to be killed by some moral sanitary method "—see the *Labour Leader* of July 25, 1918).

AND to-day what is the outcome ? What has been achieved of the " evolutionary path to Socialism " ? The workers have followed the Labour Party, have voted in two Labour Governments. What have they gained ? The conditions of the workers are worse than ever. The power of capital is intensified. Socialism is as far off as ever. Let the reformist themselves speak. Pease concludes his *History of the Fabian Society* in 1916 with a " Review of Thirty Years," and finds that after all the complacency and self-satisfaction he has to admit :

> *It must be confessed that we have made but little progress along the main road of Socialism.* Private ownership of capital and land flourishes almost (sic) as vigorously as it did thirty years ago. Its grosser cruelties have been checked, but the thing itself has barely been touched. Time alone will show whether progress is to be along existing lines.

That was after thirty years. Follow up after forty years. In 1931 a new edition of *Fabian Essays* was published with a Preface entitled " Fabian Essays Forty Years Later—What They Overlooked." Here we learn :

> The distinctive mark of the Fabian Society among the rival bodies of Socialists with which it came in conflict in its early days was its resolute constitutionalism. When the greatest Socialist of that day, the poet and craftsman, William Morris, told the workers that there was no hope for them save in revolution, we said that if that were true, there was no hope at all for them, and urged them to save themselves through Parliament, the municipalities and the franchise.
>
> *It is not so certain to-day as it seemed in the eighties that Morris was not right.*

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The workers, in short, trusted the promises of the reformist leaders ; they sought to " save themselves through Parliament, the municipalities and the franchise," and voted Labour Governments into office. What is the outcome ? The new Fabian Preface continues :

> The Treasury Bench has been filled with Socialists. Yet, so far as Socialism is concerned, it might as well have been filled with Conservative bankers or baronets.

WHAT is the outlook of the Labour Party leadership to-day ? We find the following revealing expression :

> George Lansbury said he had lived to see all that Dr. Aveling, Eleanor Marx and H. M. Hyndman had personally taught him come true. The present collapse of capitalism had come about precisely as they had prophesied. There was need to-day for an absolute belief in Socialism. After the war we had rejoiced in a swing back to Socialism, but we had been deceived. The gospel of Socialism had not been sufficiently spread.
>
> Hamilton Fyfe disagreed. Socialism after the war, he declared, had been killed by the Labour Government in 1924.
>
> (*New Clarion*, January 28, 1933.)

This discussion of the leader of the Labour Party and of the former Editor of the *Daily Herald*, reported in the principal weekly organ of the Labour Party, is typical of the present stage. After the overwhelming effects of the crisis, the failure of the two Labour Governments, the departure of the principal leaders to join the Conservatives, and the heavy electoral setback, the prevailing expression of the Labour Party leadership is one of discouragement and failure. The aged leader of the Labour Party begins to wonder aloud whether the revolutionary Marxism that he learned in his youth and abandoned is not after all being proved correct. From this he draws no conclusions : for the failure of all Labour " progressive" " democratic " promises of " the peaceful path to socialism " he endeavours to throw the blame on the workers : " we had rejoiced in a swing back to socialism, but had been deceived. The gospel of socialism had not been sufficiently spread." The ex-Editor of the *Daily Herald*,

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freed from the responsibility of official position, throws the blame on the Labour Government.

TURN to the leadership of Left Labourism. From Maxton we find the same confessions of failure :

> So far as the achievement of our major purpose, the creation of a new social order, is concerned, I say frankly that twenty-seven years of effort on my part in the working class movement seem to have ended in failure, and this applies also to the efforts of every section of our Movement.
>
> (Maxton at Sheffield, *New Leader*, December 30, 1932.)

In subsequent discussion Maxton has endeavoured to argue that this confession of failure applies equally to Marxism or Communism as to Labourism. This is only to attempt to conceal the real meaning of the lesson. The line of Marxism or Communism has already fully proved its correctness *theoretically* in relation to the whole development in England and every question of the working class movement as against the line of Labourism. But it has still to be tried *in practice* by the British working class, when it will equally demonstrate its *power in practice to defeat capitalism and establish Socialism.* The line so far of the organised British working class movement, of its leadership and policy, has been the line of Labourism, of Fabianism, of I.L.P.ism, of the denial of Marxism. And it is this line, and this line alone, that has led to the present disastrous outcome.

MARXISM on every side is coming into its own again in Britain and throughout the world. The force of facts, the lessons of experience, drive the working class anew to the revolutionary line of Marxism. The collapse of the old I.L.P. reformism, and its hoisting of the flag of " revolutionary Marxism," is a sign of the deeper processes at work within the working class, and especially among the politically conscious workers. The old fog of opportunist illusions, which dimmed the understanding of Marxism in the long " peaceful " period of Capitalism and imperialism up to 1914, has been ever more heavily shattered

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by the successive experiences of the war, of the post-war period and of the present world crisis. Marxism is to-day on the lips of all. But the fight against Opportunism, against the distortion of Marxism, is not yet over. When Opportunism has failed in the open fight against Marxism, it dons the cloak of Marxism, it invokes the name of Marxism in order to fight real Marxism, that is, revolutionary working class advance or Communism. The Second International, which has betrayed every principle of Marxism, to-day dares still to celebrate the anniversary of Marx. But the working class to-day has its strong weapon against such distortion of Marxism. The fight to clear Marxism of the dross of philistine caricatures, vulgarisation and downright distortions, the fight which it is the imperishable glory of Lenin and the Bolsheviks to have begun and waged without flinching in the conditions of the old pre-war Second International, is carried forward to-day by the Communist International, which realises the principles of Marx and Engels in the epoch of capitalist downfall and of the proletarian revolution. Marxism, the Marxism of Marx and Engels, is Communism. The fight of Marxism to-day is the fight of the Communist International. This is the most important fact for every Marxist to understand on the present fiftieth anniversary of Marx's death, if he wishes to realise his aims as a Marxist and to take his place in the fight.

R. P. D.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO MARX AND ENGELS

By V. ADORATSKI

[*We publish below a portion of Comrade Adoratski's Introduction to the new volume*[1] *recently published of the complete works of Marx and Engels. It has been specially translated from the German for the* LABOUR MONTHLY.]

THIS volume of the complete edition of the works of Marx and Engels covers the period from May, 1846, to March, 1848. The materialist conception of history, already worked out by Marx in its basic principles by the beginning of 1845, was developed and made concrete in the ensuing eighteen months during which Marx and Engels worked at *The German Ideology*. The application of the materialist conception of history to the contemporary situation revealed, as Engels once expressed it, " the perspective of a great revolution, the greatest of all time,"[2]—the proletarian revolution. The struggle carried on during this time from the position newly won by Marx and Engels' historical conception against bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideology substantially contributed to the founding of the Proletarian Party. In the course of the year 1847 the " League of the Just " (Bund der Gerechten) was won over to the conceptions of Marx and Engels and, after the exclusion of Weitling from its ranks, was completely transformed into the " Communist League."

In the main, therefore, the elements of scientific Communism were already in existence at this time, that is to say: (1) the method of dialectical materialism; (2) the materialist conception of history; (3) the theoretical understanding of capitalist methods of production and the tendencies of their development; (4) the establishment of the principles of the Communist Party as the vanguard of the Proletariat, the foundation of its basic organisation, strategy and tactics, and its intimate connection with the revolutionary struggle of the masses.

Marx and Engels were already equipped with the complete armour of scientific Communism—with Marxism—to meet the February Revolution in Paris and the March Revolution in Germany.

Dialectical materialism had already been exhaustively portrayed and developed as a world conception (Weltanschauung) in *The German*

[1] *The Complete Edition of the Works of Marx and Engels: Works and Writings from May, 1846–March, 1848.* Part One, Vol. 6. Edited by V. Adoratski for the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, Moscow. Marx-Engels Verlag, G.m.b.H. Berlin, 1932.

[2] In the review of Marx's " Critique of Political Economy " in the London newspaper, *The People*, July 25, 1869.

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Ideology. The authors achieved with the completion of this work their aim of complete independence for their conception. In the process of destroying with their criticism the Hegelian method, Marx and Engels left the realms of philosophy to devote themselves to the study of reality, that is to say, of the capitalist mode of production. This study had advanced by 1846-47 so well that before the Revolution it had produced masterpieces of dialectical materialism in such works as *The Poverty of Philosophy* and the "Communist Manifesto." Marx presents in these works a general picture of the origin and development of Capitalism and of the necessary revolutionary transformation of Capitalism into the new and higher form of Communism. In accordance with his method Marx here conceives "the development of the economic forms of society as a natural historical process." He has here brilliantly grasped and revealed the "law of the economic progress of modern society."[3]

Complete illumination is cast upon the stages of development which the Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat, and the struggle between them, have so far attained in the course of history and have yet to attain in the future. Marx shows how the workers, united by the similarity of their position, form a class, not for themselves at first but in order to oppose capital. The process of constituting a class arising out of the workers' struggle against capital leads naturally to the conquest of political power by this class. The Proletariat must raise itself into the position of the ruling class of society. But the Proletariat does not make use of such power to acquire any privileges for itself; it uses it to abolish class rule altogether. The only way by which the Proletariat is enabled to complete its formation into a class and to fulfil its rôle in world history of creating a communist society is by overthrowing the rule of the Bourgeoisie and by establishing its own rule. This basic principle runs through all the work of Marx and Engels since 1845, as it expresses the immutable law of historical development, the law of the class struggle leading to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the stage which forms the period of transition preceding the suppression of all classes and the establishment of a classless society.

> Just as the workers in *England* combined under the name of the *Chartists* so the workers in *North America* formed a political party under the name of National Reformers; and their battle-cry, far from being *monarchy* or *republic* is the *rule of the working class*, or the *rule of the bourgeoisie*. (P. 310.)

Marx was perfectly clear in his own mind just before the 1848 Revolution as to how the Proletariat must exercise its political domination in order to effect the revolutionary transformation of capitalist into communist society.

[3] C.f. Preface to the first vol. of *Capital*, 1st ed. 1867.

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> The Proletariat will make use of its political power in order step by step to confiscate all the capital of the Bourgeoisie and to centralise all instruments of production into the hands of the State, that is to say, into the hands of the proletariat organised as the ruling class, and to increase the mass of the productive forces as quickly as possible. This can naturally only be done in the first place by means of despotic attacks upon property rights and upon the bourgeois relations of production, through measures, that is, which appear to be economically insufficient and unsound, but which are produced in the course of the transformation and are unavoidable in the process of overthrowing the entire mode of production. (P. 545.)

We have here a penetrating anticipation of the progress of the proletarian revolution, an anticipation the correctness of which has been completely established by history itself. In the year 1847 we do not yet find the formula " Dictatorship of the Prolatariat." But it is already fully expressed in essence. " The rule of the Proletariat," " the elevation of the Proletariat to the position of the ruling class," " the Proletariat organised as the ruling class," " the fight for democracy," (for the workers, naturally—not for the exploiters), " confiscation of capital " from the hands of the Bourgeoisie, " centralisation of the instruments of production," " despotic attacks upon property rights," &c., all this means the " Dictatorship of the Proletariat." Marx and Engels were perfectly clear as to the inevitable necessity for forcible revolution.

Engels writes to Marx, in a letter dated October 23, 1846 : " There is no other means of achieving these ends (*i.e.*, realising the interests of the Proletariat in contradiction to those of the Bourgeoisie, the abolition of private property, and its replacement by a system of common ownership) than by forcible, democratic revolution."

> The proletariat, the lowest layer of present-day society, cannot rise up and establish itself in power unless the entire superstructure constituting the upper layers of society is blown up. (P. 536.)

Marx and Engels had at that time no illusions that the Socialist Revolution could establish a communist society at one stroke. They were well aware, on the other hand, that a whole transition period had to be gone through first. It is obvious from the law of evolution of human history revealed by Marx and further developed and made concrete in collaboration with Engels, that is to say, from the teaching of historical materialism that

> just as, a century ago, the peasant and the worker in manufacture were forced to change the whole of their habits and customs and had to become totally different human beings, when they were swept into the current of large-scale industry, so also, when commercial production shall have been introduced throughout the whole of society, when consequently, production will undergo a new evolution, different men will be needed to carry on the work of production, and indeed, different men will be engendered.[4]

[4]Engels in " The Principles of Communism," p. 517 of this volume.

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> . . . A wholesale transformation of people is required which may only be achieved by a practical movement, by a revolution.[5]

As to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat being the very essence of the Marxist conception, Marx himself wrote several years later in a letter to Weydemeyer :

> As far as I am concerned, what may be claimed as my own discovery is neither the existence of classes in modern society, nor yet the struggle between them. Bourgeois historians showed the historical evolution of this class struggle long before I did, just as bourgeois economists preceded me in presenting the economic anatomy of the classes. What was new in what I pointed out was : first, that the existence of the classes is bound up with definite historical struggles in the evolution of production ; secondly, that the class struggle leads necessarily to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat ; thirdly, that this Dictatorship itself only represents a transition period preceding the abolition of all classes and the establishment of a classless society. (March 5, 1852.)

Marx had already expressed the fundamentals of this conception in the spring of 1845 at the time of his meeting with Engels in Brussels. The experiences of the 1848 revolution gave Marx the opportunity to make the lessons paving the way for the proletarian revolution more concrete still. In the *18th Brumaire* Marx already expresses the view that the task of the coming revolution, that is to say, the proletarian revolution, is, not simply to transfer the machinery of State from one hand to another, but to destroy it.[6] After the lessons of the Paris Commune Marx gives concrete directions showing how the destroyed State machinery may be replaced—namely, by a State of the type of the Commune which is no longer a State in the strict sense of the word.

In our epoch, the epoch of Imperialism and Proletarian Revolution, these conclusions of Marx's theory have been further developed and have also received theoretical illustration and elaboration as a result of the lessons of the advancing struggle of the masses under Lenin, the leader of the Russian Bolshevists.

Marx's scientific foresight is based on a theoretical understanding of the law of development of capitalist society, on the study of political economy. In this field Marx spent five years of work in obtaining a generally clear picture of capitalism's laws of movement and historical tendencies. In the lectures which Marx gave to the Workers' Association in Brussels in 1847, we find the dialectical understanding of capital as a social relationship (p. 448). In *The Poverty of Philosophy*, in *Wage Labour and Capital* and the *Speech on Free Trade* there is a consistently conducted materialist criticism of bourgeois economics. Marx replies to the apologetics of bourgeois economics with a scientific demonstration

[5] See *German Ideology*, Marx-Engels' Complete Edition, Part I., Vol. 5, p. 64.

[6] The *18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Section 7, c.f. Marx's letter to Kugelmann, April 12, 1871.

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of the capitalist mode of production as it really is with all its inherent-contradictions. Marx shows the inevitability of crises and the impossibility of overcoming the conflicts of capitalism in any other way except that of the Communist Revolution. The Bourgeoisie, he says:

> is incapable of governing because it is incapable of guaranteeing the very existence of its slaves within its system of slavery. (P. 537.)

Marx had already achieved a general insight into the law of progress of the capitalist mode of production. The economic theory, however, had still to be worked out in all its implications. It was not until the turn of the half-century that Marx began a thorough investigation into the theories of rent and currency. The theory of surplus value was not exhaustively worked out in 1847. Marx still calls wage-labour the price of labour (pp. 474, 476). He understands the real relationship, however, when he says that the worker "sells in the market" so many "hours of his life" to the capitalists (p. 476), also when he says that the farmer buys "the labour and the power," "the productive power" of the day labourer (p. 485). The laws of surplus value, however, were not at that time worked out in their full significance. It was not until 1850 that the problems of production and the transformation of surplus value were fully revealed to him in all their inter-dependence through a penetrating and comprehensive study of economics.

The materialist conception of history permeates all the writings in this collection. As Marx himself acknowledged later, "the leading points" in his conception of history established in 1845-6, in the process of his "emancipation," "were first presented (that is to say, first published), though in a polemical form," in his book directed against Proudhon (*The Misery of Philosophy*).[7]

We also find a short summary of the materialist conception in *Wage Labour and Capital* (pp. 482-483). It is most fully and concretely treated in the writings of this period in the "Communist Manifesto."[8]

In a series of articles are to be found concrete analyses of the historical relations and the political situation of two of the more developed capitalist countries, England and France, and also of Germany, economically considered a relatively backward country. Important for the understanding of the Marxist method is the attention which Marx and Engels had already at that time paid to the theoretical formulation and solution of the question of the revolution in Germany.

We read in the "Communist Manifesto" that Germany "is on the eve of a bourgeois revolution that is bound to be carried out under more advanced conditions of European civilisation, and with a much more

[7] C.f. Marx's preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*. (January, 1859).

[8] Cf. Engels' introduction to the new edition of 1883 prepared by him.

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developed proletariat than that of England was in the seventeenth, and of France, in the eighteenth century."

The conclusion is drawn from this that the bourgeois revolution in Germany " will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution."

This characterisation of the perspectives of the German bourgeois revolution was certainly correct. It supplied the proletariat with a correct direction for their main line of practical conduct in relation to the tasks of the bourgeois revolution. Equipped with their concrete analysis of the given historical and political situation, here Marx and Engels show, as they do also in a whole series of earlier writings on the eve of the revolution, the possibility and the necessity of the growing over of the bourgeois democratic revolution into the proletarian socialist revolution, and they emphasise the decisive significance of this line of action for the proletariat and for its vanguard, the Communist Party.

Marx and Engels fully recognised the importance of the bourgeois revolution for the progress of the socialist movement.

" The workers are aware," Marx writes, " that the abolition of bourgeois property relations will not be achieved through the maintenance of feudalism, and that their own revolutionary movement only can be accelerated by the revolutionary movement of the bourgeoisie against feudal hierarchy and absolute monarchy. (P. 319.) " The proletariat," Marx writes again (p. 271), " knows that the rule of the bourgeoisie will furnish them with additional means to achieve their own aims."

The progress of the proletarian struggle would be impossible under feudal oppression and without the bourgeois democratic fight for freedom. But the Communists do not fight for this kind of freedom in order to remain stationary upon the level of development it represents ; they enter into the struggle in order to carry it further forward and to replace bourgeois democracy as speedily as possible by proletarian democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat and so become consciously caught up in the historical process.

The bourgeois revolution is, in a certain sense, under the conditions characterising the second half of the nineteenth century, more advantageous to the proletariat than to the bourgeoisie.

The problem of the relation of Communists to the bourgeois revolution is explained by Engels in his article " The Communists and Karl Heinzen," in a manner both clear and to the point.

> All measures to restrain competition and to prevent accumulation of big capital in the hands of a few individuals by limiting or altogether abolishing the right of inheritance, all State organisations of labour, all such measures are not only possible as revolutionary measures, but are necessary as such. They are possible because the entire insurgent

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> proletariat stands behind them, prepared to maintain them weapon in hand. They are possible in spite of all the difficulties and abuse brought against them by economists, for the reason that these very difficulties, this very abuse, will force the proletariat to press on ever more insistently towards the complete abolition of private property, so as not to lose what it has already gained. They are possible as preparatory, transitional advances towards the abolition of private property, but as nothing else. Yet Herr Heinzen conceives all these measures as fixed, final measures. With him they are not preparatory, but definitive, they are not the means, but the end, they are not calculated for a revolutionary, but for a peaceful, bourgeois situation, for that reason they are impossible and reactionary. (P. 286.)

This passage shows particularly clearly the difference between the revolutionary dialectical method of Marx and Engels and the mechanistic position, the metaphysical inflexibility of the entire thought process of the bourgeois democrats who regard bourgeois society as an eternal category and seek only to establish permanently the hegemony of the bourgeoisie, to perpetuate the capitalist organisation of society—without its seamy side.

For Marx and Engels democracy in itself is not the objective. Rather is democracy for them a battlefield whereon the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is to be fought out to its conclusion. The task of the Communists does not lie in remaining at ease in positions already won, but in continually recruiting new masses into the movement, masses which have, through their passivity, helped to maintain the rule of reaction.

In comparison with the earlier volumes of this first section of our edition, those now before us contain richer contributions to the strategical and tactical problems before the proletarian party. Marx and Engels enter the lists here as champions of the proletariat, as leaders of the Communist Party, the most decisive detachment of the working class, the one that is ever-driving forward.

The "Manifesto" presents the first Party programme. "The general principles expounded in this Manifesto," Marx and Engels write in the Preface to the new 1872 edition, "are on the whole as correct to-day as ever." And they still serve us at the present time as a guide to action.

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HOW LENIN STUDIED MARX

By N. KRUPSKAYA

[*The following article by Comrade Krupskaya, the widow of Comrade Lenin, which has been specially contributed to the* LABOUR MONTHLY, *provides an intimate appreciation of the tremendous store set by Comrade Lenin in all the writings of Marx and Engels. It should be particularly valuable to all our readers in view of the fresh attempts to revise Marxism now being made in English-speaking countries.*]

OWING to the backwardness of industry in Russia, the workers' movement only began to develop in the nineties, when the revolutionary struggle of the working class was already taking place in a number of other countries. There had already been the experience of the great French Revolution, the experience of the revolution of 1848, the experience of the Paris Commune in 1871. The great ideological leaders of the workers' movement—Marx and Engels—were forged out in the fire of the revolutionary struggle. The teachings of Marx showed the direction taken by social development, the inevitability of the disintegration of capitalist society, the replacement of this society by Communist society, the paths which will be taken by the new social forms, the path of the class struggle; they disclosed the rôle of the proletariat in this struggle, and the inevitability of its victory.

Our workers' movement developed under the banner of Marxism. It did not grow blindly, groping its way, but its aim and its path were plain.

Lenin did a tremendous amount to illuminate the path of struggle of the Russian proletariat with the light of Marxism. Fifty years have passed since the death of Marx, but for our Party Marxism is still the guide to action. Leninism is merely a further development of Marxism, a deepening of it.

It is therefore obvious why it is of so great an interest to illuminate the question of Lenin's study of Marx.

Lenin had a wonderful knowledge of Marx. In 1893, when he came to St. Petersburg, he astonished all of us who were Marxists at the time with his tremendous knowledge of the works of Marx and Engels.

In the nineties, when Marxist circles began to be formed, it was chiefly the first volume of "Capital" which was studied. It was possible

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to obtain " Capital," although with great difficulties. But matters were extremely bad with regard to the other works of Marx. Most of the members of the circles had not even read the " Communist Manifesto." I, for example, read it for the first time only in 1898, in German, when I was in exile.

Marx and Engels were absolutely prohibited. It is sufficient to mention that in 1897, in his article " The Characteristics of Economic Romanticism " written for the *New Word*, Lenin was compelled to avoid using the words " Marx " and " Marxism " and to speak of Marx in a roundabout way so as not to get the journal into trouble.

Lenin understood foreign languages, and he did his best to dig out everything that he could by Marx and Engels in German and French. Anna Ilyinishna tells how he read " The Poverty of Philosophy " in French together with his sister, Olga. He had to read most in German. He translated into Russian for himself the most important parts of the works of Marx and Engels which interested him.

In his first big work, published illegally by him in 1894, " Who are the Friends of the People ? " there are quotations from the " Communist Manifesto," the " Critique of Political Economy," the " Poverty of Philosophy," " German Ideology," " The Letter of Marx to Ruge " in 1843, Engels' books " Anti-Deuhring " and " The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State."

The " Friends of the People " tremendously widened the Marxist outlook of the majority of the then Marxists, who as yet had very little acquaintance with the works of Marx. It dealt with a number of questions in an entirely new way and was tremendously successful.

In the next work of Lenin, " The Economic Content of the Teachings of the Narodniki and a Criticism of Them in the Book of Struve " we find already references to " The Eighteenth Brumaire " and the " The Civil War in France," to the " The Criticism of the Gotha Programme " and the second and third volumes of " Capital."

Later, life in emigration made it possible for Lenin to become acquainted with all the works of Marx and Engels and to study them.

The biography of Marx written by Lenin in 1914 for " Granat's Encyclopedia " illustrates better than anything else the wonderful knowledge of the works of Marx by Lenin.

This is also shown by the innumerable extracts from Marx which Lenin constantly made when reading his works. The Lenin Institute has many notebooks with extracts from Marx.

Lenin used these extracts in his work, read them over and over and made notes on them. *Lenin not only knew Marx, but he also thought*

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deeply on all his teachings. In his speech at the Third All-Russian Congress of the Y.C.L. in 1920, Lenin said to the youth that it was necessary " to take the whole sum of human knowledge and to take it in such a way that Communism will not be something learned by heart but something which you have thought out yourselves, something which forms the inevitable conclusion from the point of view of modern education." (Volume XXV.) " If a Communist were to boast of Communism on the basis of ready-made conclusions, without doing serious, big and difficult work, without thoroughly understanding the facts towards which he must take a critical attitude, such a Communist would be a very poor one." (Volume XXV.)

Lenin not only studied the works of Marx but he studied what was written about Marx and Marxism by the opponents from the camp of the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie. In a polemic with them he explains the basic positions of Marxism.

His first big work was " Who are the Friends of the People " and how they fight against the Social-Democrats (a reply to an article in " Russian Wealth " against the Marxists), where he drew a contrast between the point of view of the Narodniki (Mikhailovsky, Krivenko, Yushakova) and the point of view of Marx.

In the article, " The Economic Content of the Teachings of the Narodniki, and the Criticism of Them in the Works of Struve," he pointed out in what way the point of view of Struve was different from the point of view of Marx.

When examining the agrarian question, he wrote a book, " The Agrarian Question and the Criticism of Marx " (Volume IV.), where the petty-bourgeois point of view of the Social-Democrats David, Hertz, and the Russian critics, Chernov and Bulgakov was contrasted with the point of view of Marx.

" *De choc des opinions jaillit la verrité* " (Truth arises from a conflict of opinions), says the French proverb. Lenin loved to carry it out. He constantly brought to light and contrasted class points of view on the basis of the questions of the workers' movement.

It is very characteristic how Lenin set forth various points of view side by side. A great deal of light is thrown on this by the XIX. Volume of Lenin's works, where the extracts, conspects, plans for essays, &c., on the agrarian question for the period preceding 1917 are collected.

Lenin carefully recapitulates the *statements of the " critics,"* selects and copies out the clearest and most characteristic phrases and counterposes them to the statements of Marx. In carefully analysing the statements of the " critics," he tries to show the class essence of their statements, putting forward the most important and urgent questions in prominent relief.

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Lenin very frequently *deliberately sharpened a question*. He considered that the tone was not the important thing. You may express yourself coarsely and bitingly. What is important is that you speak to the point. In the preface to the correspondence of F. A. Sorge, he gives a quotation from Mehring from his Correspondence with Sorge : " Mehring is right in saying that Marx and Engels gave little thought to a ' high tone.' They did not stop long to think before dealing a blow, but they did not whine about every blow they received." (Volume XI.) Incisiveness of form and style were natural to Lenin. He learned it from Marx. He says : " Marx relates how he and Engels fought constantly against the miserable conducting of this " Social-Democrat " and often fought *sharply* (wobei oft scharf hergeht) (Volume XI.). Lenin did not fear sharpness, but he demanded that objections should be to the point. Lenin had one favourite word which he frequently used, " quibbling." If a polemic began which was not to the point, if people began to pick at trifles or juggle with facts, he used to say : " that is mere quibbling." Lenin expressed himself with still greater force against polemics which had not the aim of bringing clearness into the question but of paying off small factional grudges. This was the favourite method of the Mensheviks. Concealing themselves behind quotations from Marx and Engels, taken out of their context, out of the circumstances in which they were written, they served factional aims entirely. In the preface to the correspondence of F. A. Sorge, Lenin wrote : " To imagine that the advice of Marx and Engels to the Anglo-American workers' movement can be simply and directly adapted to Russian conditions means to utilise Marxism, not to elucidate his *method*, not to study the concrete historic peculiarities of the workers' movement in definite countries, but for petty factional grudges of the intelligentsia." (Volume XI.)

Here we arrive directly at the question of *how Lenin studied Marx.* This can partly be seen from the previous quotation : It is necessary to elucidate the method of Marx, to learn from Marx how to study the peculiarities of the workers' movement in definite countries. Lenin did this. For Lenin the teachings of Marx were a guide to action. He once used the following expression : " Who wants to consult with Marx ? " . . . It is a very characteristic expression. He himself constantly " consulted with Marx." At the most difficult turning points of the revolution, he once again turned to the reading of Marx. Sometimes when you went into his room, when everyone around was excited, Lenin was reading Marx and could hardly tear himself away. It was not to quieten his nerves, not to arm himself with belief in the power of the working class, belief in its ultimate victory. Lenin had sufficient of this faith. He buried himself in Marx so as to " consult " with Marx, to find a reply from him to the burning questions of the workers' movement.

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In the article " F. Mehring, on the Second Duma," Lenin wrote : " The argumentation of such people is based on a poor selection of quotations. They take the general position on the support of the big bourgeoisie against the reactionary petty-bourgeoisie and without criticism adapt it to the Russian Cadets and the Russian Revolution. Mehring gives these people a good lesson. *Anyone who wants to consult with Marx* (my italics, N.K.) on the tasks of the proletariat and the bourgeois revolution must take the reasoning of Marx which apply *precisely* to the epoch of the German bourgeois revolution. It is not for nothing that our Mensheviks so fearfully avoid this reasoning. In this reasoning we see the fullest and clearest expression of the merciless struggle against the *conciliatory* bourgeoisie which was carried on by the Russian ' Bolsheviks ' in the Russian revolution." (Volume XI.)

Lenin's method was to take the works of Marx dealing with a *similar situation* and carefully analyse them, compare them with the current moment, discovering resemblances and differences. The adaptation to the revolution of 1905 to 1907 illustrates best of all, how Lenin did this.

In the pamphlet, " What is to be Done ? " in 1902, Lenin wrote : " History now puts before us an immediate task which is the *most revolutionary* of all the *immediate* tasks of the proletariat of any other country. The carrying out of this task the destruction of the most powerful support not only for European but also (we may now say) Asiatic reaction would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat." (Volume IV.)

We know that the revolutionary struggle of 1905 raised the international rôle of the Russian working class, while the overthrow of the Tsarist Monarchy in 1917, really made the Russian proletariat into the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat, but this took place only 15 years after " What is to be Done ? " was written. When in 1905, after the shooting of the workers on January 9th, the revolutionary wave from the Dvortsoff Square began to rise higher and higher, the question urgently arose as to where the Party must lead the masses, what policy it must follow. And here Lenin consulted with Marx. He quotes with special attention the works of Marx dealing with the French and German bourgeois democratic revolutions of 1848 : " The Class Struggle of 1848-50 " and the third volume of " The Literary Heritage of Marx and Engels," published by F. Mehring and dealing with the German revolution.

In June-July, 1905, Lenin wrote a pamphlet, " The Two Tactics of Social-Democracy and the Democratic Revolution," where the tactic of the Mensheviks, who took the line of conciliation with the liberal bourgeoisie was contrasted to the tactics of the Bolsheviks, who called on the

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working class to carry on a most determined and irreconcilable struggle against the Monarchy to the point of armed rebellion.

It was necessary to put an end to Tsarism, wrote Lenin in " Two Tactics." " The conference (of the New Iskra-ites) also forgot that as long as the power remains in the hands of the Tsar, any decisions of any representatives remain empty talk and just as pitiful as the ' decisions ' of the Frankfurt parliament which are famous in the history of the German Revolution of 1848. For this very reason Marx, in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, mercilessly poured sarcasm on the liberal Frankfurt ' liberators ' because they spoke excellent words, adopted all kinds of democratic ' decisions,' 'established ' all kinds of freedom, but in reality left the power in the hands of the Monarchy, and did not organise the armed struggle against the troops of the monarchy. And while the Frankfurt liberators chattered, the monarchy bided its time, strengthened its military forces, and counter-revolution, relying on real force, overthrew the democrats with all their beautiful decisions." (Volume VIII.)

Lenin raises the question whether it would be possible for the bourgeoisie to destroy the Russian Revolution by an agreement with Tsarism, " or," as Marx said at one time, " settling with Tsarism in a ' plebeian ' manner." " When the revolution decisively conquers, we shall settle with Tsarism in a Jacobine, or if you will, in a plebeian, manner." The whole of French terrorism, wrote Marx in the famous *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in 1848, was nothing else but the plebeian manner of settling with the enemies of the bourgeoisie with absolutism, feudalism, respectability. (See Marx's Literary Heritage—published by Mehring.)

Did those people who frightened the Social-Democratic Russian workers with the bogey of " Jacobinism " in the epoch of the democratic revolution ever think of the meaning of these words of Marx ? (Volume VIII.)

The Mensheviks said that their tactics were " to remain the Party of the extreme revolutionary opposition." And that this did not exclude partial seizures of power from time to time and the formation of revolutionary communes in one town or another. What do " revolutionary communes " mean, asks Lenin, and replies :

> The confusion of revolutionary thought leads them (the new Iskra-ites), as often happens, *to revolutionary phrases.* The use of the words, " Revolutionary commune " in the resolution of representatives of social-democracy is a revolutionary phrase and nothing more. Marx more than once condemned such phrases, when the tasks of the future are concealed behind soothing terms of the *dead past.* The fascination of terms which have played a rôle in history is converted in such cases into an empty and harmful tinsel, into a rattle. We must give to the workers and to the whole people a clear and unmistakeable idea of *why* we want to establish a provisional revolutionary government, *what*

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> *changes exactly* we shall carry out if we decisively influence the power, even to-morrow, if the national revolt which has commenced is victorious. These are the questions which face the political leaders. (Volume VIII.)
>
> These vulgarisers of Marxism never gave thought to the words of Marx on the necessity of replacing the weapon of criticism by criticism with weapons. Using the name of Marx everywhere, they in reality draw up a tactical resolution entirely in the spirit of the Frankfurt bourgeois cacklers, freely criticising absolutism, deepening democratic consciousness, and not understanding that the time of revolution is a time of action, above and below. (Volume VIII.)

" Revolutions are the locomotives of history," says Marx. By this reference to Marx, Lenin appraises the rôle of the revolution that was breaking out.

In his further analysis of the sayings of Karl Marx in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, Lenin makes clear what the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry means. But in drawing the analogy, Lenin dwells also on the question in what way our bourgeois democratic revolution differs from the German bourgeois democratic revolution of 1848. He says:

> Thus it was only in April, 1849, after the revolutionary newspaper, *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (which had been published since June 1, 1848) had existed almost a year, that Marx and Engels expressed themselves in favour of a separate labour organisation. Hitherto they simply conducted the " organ of democracy," which was not connected by any organisational link with an independent labour party. This fact—monstrous and improbable from our contemporary point of view—shows us clearly what an enormous difference there was between the then German and the present Russian social-democratic Labour Party. This fact shows us how much weaker (owing to the backwardness of Germany in 1848, economically and politically—absence of state unity) were the proletarian features of the movement in the German democratic revolution, the proletarian streak in it.

Particularly interesting are Vladimir Ilyitch's articles which refer to 1907 and are devoted to the correspondence and activity of Marx.

They are " The Foreword to the Translation of Marx's Letters to K. L. Kugelmann," " Mehring on the Second Duma," and " The Foreword to the Letters to F. A. Sorge." These articles throw a particularly vivid light on the method by which Lenin studied Marx. The last article is of exceptional interest. It was written in the period when Lenin had taken up once more seriously the study of philosophy, in connection with his divergencies with Bogdanov, when the issues of dialectical materialism called for his special attention.

While studying simultaneously also the sayings of Marx that referred to questions analogous to those which sprang up among us in connection with the breakdown of the revolution, and questions of dialectical and

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historical materialism, *Lenin learned from Marx how to apply to the study of historical development the method of dialectical materialism.*

In the " Foreword to the Correspondence with F. A. Sorge " he wrote : " A comparison of what Marx and Engels had to say on questions of the Anglo-American and German labour movements is very instructive. If one takes into consideration that Germany, on the one hand, and Great Britain and America, on the other, represent different stages of capitalist development, different forms of the rule of the bourgeoisie as a class in the whole political life of these countries, the said comparison assumes special significance. From the scientific point of view we have here a sample of materialistic dialectic, ability to bring forward and emphasise different points, different sides of the question in their application to the concrete peculiarities of various political and economic conditions. From the point of view of practical politics and tactics of the worker's party, we have here a sample of the manner in which the creators of the " Communist Manifesto " defined the task of the struggling proletariat as applied to the various phases of the national labour movement of the various countries " (free translation).

The revolution of 1905 *brought to the fore a whole series of new essential questions during the solution of which Lenin went more deeply into the works of Karl Marx. The Leninist method* (*Marxist through and through*) *of studying Marx was forged in the fire of the revolution.*

This method of studying Marx armed Lenin for struggle against the distortions of Marxism with their emasculation of its revolutionary essence. We know what an important part Lenin's book " State and Revolution " has played in the organising of the October Revolution and the Soviet Power. This book is entirely based on a deep study of Marx's revolutionary teachings about the state.

> Marx's doctrines are now undergoing the same fate which, more than once in the course of history, has befallen the doctrines of other revolutionary thinkers and leaders of oppressed classes struggling for emancipation. During the lifetime of great revolutionaries, the oppressing classes have invariably meted out to them relentless persecution, and received their teaching with the most savage hostility, most furious hatred, and a ruthless campaign of lies and slanders. After their death, however, attempts are usually made to turn them into harmless saints, canonising them, as it were, and investing their name with a certain halo by way of " consolation " to the oppressed classes, and with the object of duping them, while at the same time emasculating and vulgarising the real essence of their revolutionary theories and blunting their revolutionary edge. At the present time the bourgeoisie and the opportunists within the labour movement are co-operating in this work of adulterating Marxism. They omit, obliterate, and distort the revolutionary side of its teaching, its revolutionary soul, and push to the foreground and extol what is, or seems, acceptable to the bourgeoisie.

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> All the Socialist Chauvinists are now "Marxists"—save the mark! And more and more do German bourgeois professors, erstwhile specialists in the demolition of Marx, now speak of the "National-German" Marx, who, forsooth, has educated the splendidly organised working class for the present predatory war. In these circumstances, when the distortion of Marxism is so widespread, our first task is to resuscitate the real nature of Marx's teachings on the subject of the State. (First page in "The State and Revolution.")

In "The Foundations of Leninism" Comrade Stalin wrote:

> Not until the next phase, the phase of direct action, of proletarian revolution, when the overthrow of the bourgeoisie had become a question of practical politics, did the problem of finding reserves for the proletarian army (strategy) become actual, and the problem of the organisation of that army whether on the parliamentary or the extra-parliamentary field (tactics) clearly demand a solution. Not until this phase had begun, could proletarian strategy be systematised and proletarian tactics be elaborated. *It was now that Lenin disinterred Marx's and Engels' masterly ideas on strategy and tactics, ideas which the opportunists of the Second International had buried out of sight.* (The italics are mine.—N.K.)

But Lenin did not confine himself to re-establishing individual tactical propositions of Marx and Engels. He developed them further and supplemented them by new ideas and propositions, creating out of all this a system of rules and leading principles for the conduct of the class struggle of the proletariat. Such pamphlets of Lenin as "What is to be Done," "Two Tactics," "Imperialism," "State and Revolution," "Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky," and "Left-Wing Communism," will no doubt be a most valuable contribution to the common treasure-house of Marxism, to its revolutionary arsenal. The strategy and tactic of Leninism is a science regarding the leadership of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat." (J. Stalin, "Questions of Leninism.") Marx and Engels said that their teaching "is not a dogma, but a guide to action." These words of theirs were continually repeated by Lenin. The method by which he studied the works of Marx and Engels, and revolutionary practice, all the circumstances of the epoch of proletarian revolutions, helped Lenin to convert just the revolutionary side of Marx into a real guide to action.

I shall dwell on a question which is of decisive significance. Not so long ago we celebrated the fifteenth anniversary of the Soviet Power. And in this connection we recalled how the seizure of power was organised in October. It wasn't a spontaneous act, it was deeply thought out by Lenin who was guided by Marx's direct instructions regarding the organising of an uprising.

The October Revolution, by placing dictatorship into the hands of the proletariat, radically changed all the conditions of struggle, but only

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because Lenin was guided not by the letter of the teachings of Marx and Engels, but by their revolutionary essence, because he knew how to apply Marxism also to the building up of Socialism in the epoch of proletarian dictatorship.

I shall only dwell on a few points. Thorough research work is necessary here: select everything that was taken by Lenin from Marx and Engels, indicating in what periods and in connection with what tasks of the revolutionary movement. I have not even mentioned such important questions as the national question, imperialism, &c. The publication of Lenin's complete collected works makes this work easier. *Lenin's way of studying Marx in all the phases of revolutionary struggle from beginning to end will help us to understand better and go deeper not only into Marx, but into Lenin himself, into his method of studying Marx and the method of converting Marx's teachings into a guide to action.*

There is one more side of Lenin's study of Marx which must be mentioned owing to its great significance. Lenin did not only study what Marx and Engels wrote as well as what Marx's "critics" wrote about him, *he also studied the way which led Marx to his various views, and the works and books which stimulated Marx's thoughts and drove them in a definite direction.* He studied, so to speak, the sources of Marxist philosophy, what and how precisely Marx took from this or that writer. He was specially concerned in making a deep study of the method of dialectical materialism. In 1922, in the article "Meaning of Militant Materialism," Lenin said that it was up to the contributors to the periodical "Under the Banner of Marxism" to organise the work for a systematic study of Hegel's dialectics from the materialist point of view. He believed that without a serious philosophical basis it is impossible to hold out in the struggle against the pressure of bourgeois ideas and the restoration of bourgeois philosophy. It was on the basis of his own experience that Lenin wrote about the manner of studying Hegel's dialectics from the materialist point of view. We give here the corresponding paragraph from Lenin's article "On the Meaning of Militant Materialism."

> But in order to avoid reacting to such a phenomenon unintelligently, we must understand that no natural science, no materialism whatever, can hold out in the struggle against the onslaught of bourgeois ideas and the restoration of bourgeois philosophy without a solid philosophical basis. In order to give aid to this struggle and help to carry it out to its successful conclusion, the natural scientist must be a *modern* Materialist—a conscious adherent of that Materialism which Marx represents; that is, he must be a *dialectical* Materialist. To achieve this the staff of *Under the Banner of Marxism* must organise a systematic study of Hegelian dialectics from the Materialist point of view, *i.e.*, the dialectics which Marx applied concretely in his *Capital* and used in his historical and political works. . . .

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> . . . Basing ourselves on the manner in which Marx applied the materialist conception of Hegelian dialectics we can, and must, work out these dialectics from all sides. The magazine must publish excerpts from the principal works of Hegel ; must interpret them materialistically, and give examples of how Marx applied dialectics, as well as examples of dialectics from the field of economic and political relations. Modern history, particularly modern imperialist war and revolution, provide innumerable examples of this kind. The editors and staff of *Under the Banner of Marxism* should, I think, represent a sort of " Association of Materialist Friends of Hegelian Philosophy." Modern natural scientists will find (if they will seek and if we can learn to help them) in the materialist interpretation of Hegelian dialectics a number of answers to those brought forward to the front and which cause the intellectual admirers of bourgeois fashions to " slip " into the reactionary camp. (P. 41, *Lenin on Religion*, Little Lenin Library, Volume VII.)

The IX. and XII. volumes of Lenin's collected works have already been published in the Soviet Union. They divulge the whole process of Lenin's thought when he was working through Hegel's chief works, they show how he applied the method of dialectical materialism to the study of Hegel, how closely he connected this study with a deep study of Marx's sayings, with the ability of converting Marxism into a guide to action in the most varied circumstances.

But Hegel was not the only object of Lenin's study. He read Marx's letter to Engels of November 1, 1859, in which he criticises severely Lassalle's book, " The Philosophy of Heraclitus, the Dark, of Ephesus " (two volumes), and calls this work " amateurish." Lenin gives, to begin with, a brief formulation of Marx's criticism : " Lassalle simply *repeats* Hegel, he *describes* him, *ruminates* millions of times on certain sayings of Heraclitus, embellishing his work with a surfeit of most learned Gellertian ballast." But, nevertheless, Lenin plunges into the study of this work of Lassalle, makes conspects and extracts of it, writes notes to it, and sums it up thus : " Marx's criticism is on the whole correct. It isn't worth while to read Lassalle's book." But the work over this book gave Lenin himself a deeper understanding of Marx : he understood why this book of Lassalle displeased Marx to such an extent.

In conclusion, I will mention one more form of Lenin's work over Marx—the popularisation of Marx's teachings. If the populariser takes his work " seriously," if his aim is to give in a very simple and intelligible form an explanation of the very essence of this or that theory, this work will help him very much.

Lenin treated this work very seriously indeed. " There is nothing I would like so much as being able to write for the workers," he wrote from exile to Plekhanov and Axelrod.

He wanted to explain and bring near to the masses the teachings of Marx. In the nineties, when he worked in workers' circles, he endeavoured

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to explain to them first of all the first volume of " Capital," and illustrated the propositions brought forward there by examples from the life of his hearers. In 1911, in the Party school in Lonjumeau (near Paris), where Lenin was working hard for the preparation of cadres of leaders for the budding revolutionary movement, he lectured to the workers on political economy, and tried to bring home to them as simply as possible the foundations of Marx's teachings. In his articles to *Pravda*, Ilyitch tried to popularise various points from Marx's teachings. A sample of Leninist popularisation is his characterisation during the 1921 disputes on trade unions of the manner of studying the subject with the application of the dialectical method. Lenin said :

> To know the subject thoroughly, one must take hold of and study all its sides, all the connections and its proper place in the given situation. We shall never fully attain this, but the demand of many-sidedness will make us steer clear of errors and inertia. This comes first. Secondly, dialectical logic demands that the subject be taken in its development, in its " self-motion " (as Hegel says) and its changes. Thirdly, human practice must concentrate on full " definition " of the subject, as a criterion of truth, as well as a practical indicator of the connection of the subject with what man needs. Fourthly, dialectical logic teaches us that " There is no abstract truth, that truth is always concrete," as the late Plekhanov, who was a follower of Hegel, liked to say.

These few lines are the quintessence of what Lenin came to as a result of long years of work over philosophical questions, in which he always made use of the method of dialectical materialism, " consulting " all the time, Marx. In a compressed form, these lines indicate all that is essential, that must be a guide to action, while studying phenomena.

The way in which Lenin worked over Marx is a lesson in how to study Lenin himself. His teaching is inseparably connected with the teaching of Marx, it is Marxism in action, it is the Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions.

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IDEOLOGY IN GENERAL

By KARL MARX and FRIEDRICH ENGELS

[*The following passage has been taken from the recently-published volume of the Complete Works of Marx and Engels entitled "Die Deutsche Ideologie" (German Ideology). "Die Deutsche Ideologie" was begun in the spring of* 1845, *in Brussels, by Marx and Engels jointly, with a view, as Marx wrote later in his "Critique of Political Economy," "to work out together the contrast between our view and the idealism of German philosophy, in fact to settle our accounts with our former philosophical conscience (Hegelianism)." The plan was carried out in the form of a criticism of post-Hegelian philosophy. The work was prepared for publication in* 1846, *but owing to the opposition of both the police and the tendencies which Marx and Engels were attacking, nothing came of it, and except for a section published in* 1847 *and odd fragments issued since their death, the work has lain for* 86 *years, to be published in a complete form by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in* 1932. *The passage given below is from the first part of the first section, devoted to Feuerbach. It has been specially translated for the* LABOUR MONTHLY *from the definitive German edition published as the fifth volume of the first section of the Complete Works of Marx and Engels.*]

THE premises from which we start are not arbitrary, they are not dogmas; but real premises which can only be evaded in the realms of imagination. They consist of real beings, their behaviour and the material conditions in which they live, both those pre-existing them and those produced by their own actions. It follows that these premises can be verified in a purely empirical manner.

The basic premise underlying all human history is naturally the existence of living human beings. The first point to ascertain, therefore, is the physical organisation of these individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature conditioned thereby. We cannot in this place enter upon a discussion either of the physical constitution of human beings or of the pre-existing natural conditions of their environment, that is to say, the geological, oro-hydrographical and climatic conditions among others. All historical study must proceed from these basic conditions and their modification in the course of history through the actions of human beings.

Human beings may be distinguished from animals by their consciousness, religion, or how you will; but they begin to distinguish themselves from animals immediately they start producing their means of existence, a step conditioned in them by their physical organisation. In producing their means of existence human beings indirectly produce their material life itself.

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The manner in which men produce their means of existence is dependent in the first place on the nature of those original means of existence that require reproduction. This mode of production must not only be considered in the sense that it constitutes the reproduction of man's physical existence. On the contrary it is rather a definite kind of human activity, a definite expression and mode of life itself. As individuals express their life, so they exist. What a man is, therefore, is coincident with his production, inseparable both from what he produces and how he produces it. What human beings are, in short, depends on the material conditions of their production.

This production first takes place with the increase in population. Again, it itself pre-supposes a mutual intercourse between men. The form of this intercourse, also, is conditioned by production.

The relations of different countries to each other depend on the extent each one has developed its forces of production, division of labour and internal trade. This is universally admitted. But not only the relation of one country to another, but the whole internal structure of the country itself depends upon the stage of development of its production and of its home and foreign trade. The degree to which a country's division of labour is developed provides the best indication of the stage of its production. Every new productive force in so far as it is not simply a quantitive extension of productive forces already existing (putting land under cultivation, for instance) brings with it a new development in the division of labour.

The division of labour within a country first leads to a separation between industrial and commercial labour on the one hand and agricultural labour on the other which leads next to a separation of town and country and an antagonism of their interests. Further development in the division of labour separates commercial from industrial labour. At the same time, as a consequence of this division of labour there develops in the different branches of production further distinct divisions among the individuals co-operating on definite tasks. The relation between these separate departments is determined by the various modes of agricultural, industrial and commercial labour (Patriarchalism, Slavery, Estates, Classes). The same relationships are to be observed under conditions of more highly-developed trade in the connection between countries.

The various stages of development in the division of labour are so many different forms of property; that is to say, each separate stage in the division of labour determines the relationships of men to each other as regards the material, the instrument and the product of labour.

The original form of property is tribal property. It corresponds to the undeveloped stage of production where a tribe exists by hunting,

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fishing, cattle-rearing, or, in the most advanced period, by agriculture. In this last case tribal property pre-supposes the existence of much uncultivated land. Division of labour is still rudimentary at this stage and confines itself to an extension of the division of labour naturally inherent in the family. The social structure, therefore, goes no further than an extension of family relations : a patriarchal chief, under him the tribe members, and lastly, the slaves. Slavery, latent in the family, develops gradually with the increase of population and the multiplication of its needs and with the growth of external intercourse, either through war or trade by barter.

The second form of property is the communal and State property of classical times ; a form which develops from several tribes uniting, either through treaty or conquest, into a city, and which retains slavery. Along with the communal form of property there comes into being movable (and later, also, fixed) private property, but as an abnormal form, subordinate to communal property. The citizens only possess power over their slaves by their association in a community, and are in consequence bound to the communal form of property. We have to do here with the communal private property of the active citizens, who are compelled to remain at this primitive level of association to secure themselves in the face of their slaves. Then decay of the entire social structure built upon this form of property, and with it the decline of the people's power, sets in in proportion, above all, as private fixed property develops. The division of labour is already more highly developed. We already find antagonism between town and country ; later there arises antagonism between countries representing town and agricultural interests and, in the town itself, antagonism between industrial and maritime interests. The class relationship between citizens and slave has attained its complete form.

The factor of conquest seems to contradict this entire conception of history, for up to now it has been the custom to represent force, war, devastation and robbery with murder as the motive powers of history. We must confine ourselves here to the main points, so we shall take only one striking example, the destruction of an old civilisation by a barbarous people and the emergence therefrom of a new structure of society beginning at the beginning (Rome and the Barbarians, Feudalism and the Gauls, the Byzantine Empire and the Turks). With the conquering Barbarians war itself is still, as we have previously stated, a regular form of intercourse exploited by them the more keenly the more the growth of population within their traditional—and for them the one possible—mode of production creates the need for new means of production. In Italy, on the other hand, the free population had almost entirely disappeared, while the slaves were always dying out and in need to be

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replaced. This was caused by a concentration of landed property due not only to buying up and debt but also to inheritance as, owing to their great debauchery and the rarity of marriage among them the old families gradually died out and their possessions accumulated in the hands of a decreasing few. At the same time this property had become transformed into pasture land, because, besides the usual economic reasons still valid to-day, the importation of plundered and tribute corn had led to a scarcity of consumers for Italian corn. Slavery remained the basis of all production. The plebeians with their status between freemen and slaves never rose above the condition of a lumpen proletariat. Rome never really emerged out of the City state and was not much more than politically connected with the Provinces, a connection, naturally, which could equally well be severed by political events.

With the development of private property there first arise those same conditions we shall find obtaining, though on a much larger scale, with modern private property. On the one hand there is the concentration of private property which began very early in Rome (witness the Licinian Land Law), and progressed rapidly after the civil wars and especially under the Caesars; on the other hand we see proceeding in connection with this the transformation of the plebeian small land-holders into a proletariat which, however, on account of its intermediate position between the property-owning citizens and the slaves had no independent development.

The third form of property is feudal property or property according to rank. Just as Antiquity took its point of departure from the town and its small surrounding territory, so the Middle Ages originated in the land. The population that existed there already, sparse and scattered over a wide area, a population that was never increased much by the conquering invaders, determined this different starting point. As opposed to the growth of Greece and Rome, Feudalism developed on a far more extensive land surface already prepared through the Roman conquests and the spread of agriculture at first connected with them. The decay which occurred in the last centuries of the Roman Empire and the barbarian conquest itself combined to destroy a quantity of the forces of production; agricultural production had fallen off, industry had dwindled through lack of markets, trade was either dormant or forcibly suspended and the population of town and country had diminished. These pre-existing conditions and the method of organising the conquest conditioned by them led to the development, under the influence of the germanic military constitution, of the feudal form of property. This also was based as was that of tribal and communal property on a community, which stood opposed, not to slaves as in Antiquity but to the serf-class of small peasants as the direct producers. Simultaneously

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with the complete establishment of Feudalism there arose the antagonism with the towns. The hierarchical structure of land property and the bands of armed retainers that were part and parcel of it gave the nobility power over the serfs. This feudal structure was just as much an association against the subjected class of producers as was that of the communal property of Antiquity; only the form of the association and its relation to the direct producers was different owing to the different conditions of production.

To this feudal structure of land property there corresponded in the towns corporative property, the feudal organisation of handicraft. Property consisted here chiefly in the work of each individual. The need to associate against the robber bands of the nobles, the need for communal markets in a time when the artisan was also a merchant, the growing competition of serfs abandoning the land and flocking to the flourishing towns, the feudal structure of the entire country, combined to produce the Guilds. The gradually collected savings of separate craftsmen and their evenly maintained numbers, alongside the increasing population, led to the journeyman and apprentice relationship that brought into being a hierarchy in the towns similar to that prevailing in the country.

Property, therefore, in the feudal epoch, existed chiefly on the one hand in land property with its fettered serf labour and on the other hand in personal labour with small capital disposing of journeyman labour. The structure of both forms was determined by the limited productive relations—insignificant crude agriculture and handicraft industry. Division of labour found but little place in the heyday of Feudalism. The antagonism between town and country existed in every country. Divisions according to rank were, it is true, very sharply demarcated, but apart from the distinction between princes, nobles, clergy and peasantry in the country, and masters, journeymen and apprentices, and soon the crowds of day-labourers, in the towns, no important division of labour was found. It was made difficult in agriculture because of the small-scale system of cultivation, besides which domestic industry grew up amongst the peasantry themselves. In industry there was never any division of labour within the separate handicrafts, and very little amongst them. The division of industry and commerce found in the ancient towns only developed in the newer ones later, when the towns entered into relations with one another.

The embracing of the larger districts into feudal kingdoms was necessary alike for the landed nobility and for the towns. It followed, therefore, that the organisation of the ruling class, that is to say, the nobles, had always a monarch at its head.

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The fact is, then, as follows : individuals who are productively engaged in definite ways enter into these definite social and political relations. Empirical observation must in every single instance demonstrate without any mystification or speculation the connection of the political and social structure with production. Social structure and the State constantly arise out of the processes of existence of definite people ; of people not as they may appear in their own or another's imagination, but as they really are, that is to say, as they work, as they produce material things, in short, as they act under determinate material limitations, premises and conditions—factors independent of their wills.

The production of ideas, conceptions, of consciousness, is directly bound up in the first place with the material activity and the material intercourse of mankind, with the speech of actual life. Conception, thought, the intellectual intercourse of men are thus seen as the direct product of men's material circumstances. The same is true of intellectual production as it is expressed in the language of the politics, law, ethics, religion and metaphysics of a nation. Human beings are the producers of their mental conceptions and ideas, but real, working human beings as they are determined by a definite development of their forces of production and the intercourse, up to its most advanced stages, arising therefrom. Consciousness ("*das Bewusstsein*") can never be anything else but conscious being ("*das Bewusste Sein*") and men's being is their actual process of existence. If people and the relations between them appear in all ideology upside-down as though in a camera obscura, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical process of being, as the reversal of objects on the retina arises from their direct physical process of being.

By a practice exactly opposite to that of German philosophy, which comes down from the sky to earth, we here rise from the earth to the sky. That is to say, we do not proceed from what people say, imagine or pretend to themselves, and not from the discussed, thought-out, pictured, imagined person in order to arrive at the corporeal person ; but the point of departure will be the real, active person and out of his actual process of being will be represented the development of ideological reflexes and the echoes of this process of being. Even the phantasmagoria in men's brains are necessary sublimates of their material, empirically ascertainable process of existence, a process inseparably connected with material premises. Morals, religion, metaphysics and other ideology, together with the accompanying forms of consciousness, thus no longer here present the appearance of independence. They have no history and no development, but men, as they develop their material production and their material intercourse, change with this, their reality, their thought and the product of their thought. Consciousness does not determine

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life, but life determines consciousness. In the first method of observation, one proceeds from consciousness considered as the living being; in the second, that corresponding to actual life, one proceeds from the real, living individual himself and considers consciousness only as *his* consciousness.

This latter method is not founded on air. It proceeds from the premises of real life; and never for a moment leaves them. Its premises are not men fixed in some fantastic seclusion, but men in their actual empirically observable process of development under definite conditions. Directly this active process of being is represented, history ceases to be a collection of dead facts, as it is with the empiricists who are themselves still abstract, or an imaginary play of imaginary subjects, as with the idealists.

There, where speculation ceases, when we come down to life itself, there begins real, positive science, the representation of practical activity, of mankind's practical processes of development. The phrases about consciousness cease, actual knowledge must take their place. With the representation of reality, self-sufficient philosophy loses its medium of existence. In its place there can, at best, be substituted a collection of the most general results which may be gathered from a study of the historical development of mankind. These abstractions in themselves, separated from actual history, are absolutely worthless. They can only serve to facilitate the ordering of historical material, to indicate the sequence of its separate strata. They in no way present, as does philosophy, a recipe or formula for the fashioning of history. The difficulty here, begins precisely when one starts examining and putting in order the material either of a past epoch or of the present; when one starts on a real presentation. The overcoming of such difficulties is determined by premises which cannot be given at this stage, but which may only be yielded by study of the actual processes of existence and the actions of people of every epoch.

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THE FUTURE OF THE RANK AND FILE MOVEMENTS

By J. R. CAMPBELL

THE capitalist crisis continues to deepen in Great Britain. In spite of the fatuous talk of MacDonald about the "depression being arrested," in spite of the Bank chairmen's desperate attempts to find a basis for "moderate optimism" as to the immediate future, there is every signs that the crisis is deepening.

Production is falling steadily. One has got to go back 34 years to find production so low in the coal industry as it was in the last quarter of 1932. Foreign trade is steadily shrinking and in a series of industries new attacks on the workers are being prepared.

The *Daily Express* and the *Daily Herald* are seeking to mask this new offensive of the employing class by loud-mouthed advocacy of the "policy of high wages." None of those journals do anything with regard to helping the workers to meet a definite attack on their wages.

The *Herald* and the *Express* boycott the vital Irish strike news and so hinder the mobilisation of the British workers behind their Irish comrades in the struggle against wage-cuts.

But behind all this talk of the possibility of high wages in the midst of the deepening capitalist crisis, the employers' attack is developing. The Irish railway workers are being subjected to the most brutal attack; armed policemen protect scabs on buses, soldiers are paraded along the railway lines and at every railway station and the whole force of British Imperialism stands behind the Northern railway companies in the drive to enforce the full ten per cent. cut in wages.

A whole number of firms in the boot and shoe trade at Northampton prepare to scrap the existing agreement; the mineowners prepare to impose a further worsening of conditions on the miners. All this talk of high wages is simply a screen for the employers' preparations which are taking place.

In every struggle sections of reformist workers who have formerly displayed the utmost confidence in the leading officials are now coming out and playing a prominent part in the struggle against wage-cuts, and in the process are finding themselves more and more in opposition to the reformist policy pursued by those officials. This is particularly true in reference to the leading branch officials in a number of industries.

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Not only so but the willingness of the workers to take sympathetic action on behalf of another section involved in a strike is growing. The rapid spread of the strike in support of the Forest Gate movement in London; the sympathetic action of the dockers and carters of Belfast and the ports of Northern Ireland with the railwaymen are clear instances of this.

The capitalist class realises the danger of this development and so do the union leaders. They, therefore, mutually support each other.

Beaverbrook gives the leaders of the various unions front-page space to advertise their hatred of all wage-cuts, and the union leaders use the *Express* and the *Herald* to embark on a campaign of the wildest demagogy.

The advocacy of the policy of high wages is accompanied by the advocacy of the 40-hour week and some tall talk about the necessity of reorganising the unions for action against capitalism.

These manœuvres are being undertaken on an unprecedented scale, and they can meet with a great measure of success if the revolutionaries in all industries do not actively expose them before the workers. If these manœuvres do meet with a measure of success the price we will have to pay will be further tremendous betrayals in the immediate future.

How can those betrayals be avoided? In the first place we have got to show that the workers have been most successful in resisting betrayal in those industries and trades where their opposition to the wage-cutting policy of the bureaucracy has assumed an organised form.

The classic example of this fact will be found in the recent history of the London Busmen. A little over a year ago no rank-and-file movement existed amongst the busmen. The militant spirit was there; a certain tradition of past rank-and-file movements and unofficial action was there; but there was no organised rank-and-file movement as exists to-day.

That movement was slowly built up by patient work in the union branches (which in this industry are on a garage basis); it was able to play a big rôle in the fight against wage-cuts and speeding-up.

The company, aided by the union officials, was out to impose wage-cuts and to speed up schedules. The rank-and-file movement was able, by virtue of its persistent work, to get the workers to reject a series of wage-cuts that were put forward by the union officials as the "best possible terms" obtainable, until they forced the withdrawal of wage-cuts altogether.

On the basis of this success the movement was able to consolidate itself for the next phase of its fight—the fight against speed-up. Previous

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to the Forest Gate strike, which spread until it embraced 13,000 of the busmen in London, there had been no less than seven strikes against speed carried out on a garage basis, all of which resulted in victories for the men.

The Forest Gate strike succeeded in getting a particularly obnoxious speed schedule modified, in securing the remedy of numbers of grievances at the other garages, and putting a check to the ferocious speed campaign of the company. These very definite victories would not have been possible without the previous tireless work in building the rank-and-file movement.

Similarly on the railways the growth of the Vigilance movement has been a material factor in the decision of the Wages Board chairman (looking at the interests of capitalism as a whole) not to risk an immediate railway strike by imposing a direct wage-cut but first to attack by the way of the pooling schemes—a more difficult attack to meet. In meeting this attack much can be learned from the fight of the busmen against speeding-up.

There is, however, another example of a rank-and-file movement formed around a particular issue which has failed to develop to the extent that it might.

The Members' Rights Movement in the Amalgamated Engineering Union achieved a brilliant success in mobilising the membership of the union on behalf of the expelled militants and securing their reinstatement. Having achieved this object the movement failed to develop further and is showing a tendency to stagnation.

We believe that the reason for this was that the membership of the union who were supporting the Members' Rights Movement, did not understand the absolute necessity of developing a powerful trade union opposition movement in the present period, if the workers were to be safeguarded from betrayal.

They saw clearly that their Executive had committed a crime against working-class interests in expelling the militants, but they saw this crime in the main, as a particularly vicious action of the Executive, deviating from the good old principles of the union.

They did not see that the expulsions were part of the general line of co-operation with capitalism that was being tirelessly pursued by the leaders, a line that has got to be fought in all its expressions if the working class is to avoid being driven down deep into poverty and slavery, a line that can only be fought by the organisation of a militant trade union opposition.

It is clear that rank-and-file movements will often develop around a certain issue—a wage-cut, the violation of trade union democracy by

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the officials, &c. In developing the movement around those issues, however, we must explain to a greater extent than hitherto why the union officials are taking the stand that they are taking, the rôle of those leaders as agents of capitalism in the ranks of the workers, the meaning of their general policy, of which the issue that the workers are fighting around is a part. Only by carrying out—on the basis of the workers' own experience—of this fundamental propaganda can we show the need of a permanent militant opposition movement.

This is a thing which we must do again and again within every rank-and-file movement.

The rank-and-file movements have so far been developed on the basis of the activisation of the trade union branches. The branches—and in many cases the branch officials—have been won for a militant rank-and-file policy. One militant branch has pulled others into the movement and the movement has grown.

We have to do much more. We have to ensure that scores of workers who do not now attend branch meetings are brought into activity and that groups of supporters of the rank-and-file movement are formed in the branches. It is obvious that even in the most militant branch there will be many members who do not at first support the rank-and-file policy. A strenuous campaign must be waged to win those workers.

The whole activity of those militant branches in the rank-and-file movement must be turned to the factories and depots and garages in order to ensure that strong groups of supporters of the rank-and-file movement are built up in every department and in every shift.

The need for this anchoring of the rank-and-file movement in the factories will be appreciated above all by those comrades who are local officials of the unions. Those comrades know that in fulfilling their class duty they are more and more being forced to lead the workers into action against the will of the higher officials. Yet they know that their position is a peculiarly exposed one. They are exposed to the heavy pressure of the bureaucratic machine. While they have the support of the minority of active workers who attend the branch meetings, they know that in a time of crisis the officials may be able to mobilise the great mass of the members who do not attend the branch meetings against them. The development of powerful groups of the rank-and-file movements in the factories is a guarantee that the head officials will not be able to do this.

This is particularly vital in view of the fact that it will become increasingly necessary if the interests of the workers are to be defended to take action against the will of the officials either by launching a strike independent of the officials or by continuing a strike that the officials wish to call off.

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In the early stages of the busmen's and railwaymen's movement the will of the rank-and-file was expressed in the militant branches bringing pressure to bear upon the leaders to adopt a certain line of policy.

The bus strikes, especially the recent great strike, were a development beyond this. They were led independent of the leaders by branches under the control of the rank-and-file movement.

It is clear that in the last strike the element of pressure on the officials was still strong. Many of the workers saw the strike as a sharp means of bringing pressure on the leaders, who in turn would see the company and get modified terms. There was manifest reluctance to set up a Central Strike Committee, and the question of direct negotiations between the strikers and the company was not raised.

Nevertheless, the way that the company and the head officials supported one another against the strikers, the threats of those officials against the strike leaders, shows the absolute necessity of mobilising every worker against those capitalist agents and conducting strikes and negotiations independent of them.

Every rank-and-file movement should see the inescapable necessity of conducting struggles independent of the trade union leaders, should imbue its members with the necessity of doing this and therefore of the necessity of rooting the movement in the factories.

The busmen will never be able to get the bus company to give concessions quite so readily as it has in the past. Struggles in the future will be sharper. The head officials will act a thousand times more energetically than hitherto and the rank-and-file movement will have to fight harder and should prepare to do so.

We should not be unduly downcast about this prospect because there are vast reserves which we can work to bring into action. The lesson of the bus strike like the lesson of all recent strikes, shows that even the most militant workers are under-estimating the fighting spirit of the masses.

When the Forest Gate strike broke out there was hardly a single rank-and-file leader who believed that it could be extended so rapidly as it was. Everyone in the rank-and-file movements should realise the mighty source of strength they have in the rising spirit of struggle amongst the workers.

The further question that is becoming of increasing importance is the relations of the various rank-and-file movements, one with the other. However diverse their origins the workers in those movements speedily recognise that they have many points in common.

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For example, all of the rank-and-file movements are interested in ensuring that there is elected to the coming Trades Union Congress militant delegates, and that militant resolutions appear on the agenda.

What are some of the issues being raised at the present time by the Trade Union bureaucracy?

First and foremost there is the question of the reduction of the hours of labour. In every industry the employed workers, fighting against the tremendous speeding-up that is taking place and seeing hundreds of their old workmates unemployed, are demanding reductions in the hours of labour.

The attitude of the union officials is a tricky one. In an industry like the mining industry, where the question of the reduction of hours is a burning issue between the workers and the employers, the officials come forward and declare that to fight for a reduction of hours is futile, that the industry can't afford it, &c.

They, however, try to win back lost popularity with the workers by shouting for the adoption of an international 40 hours convention by the Labour Office of the League of Nations, although they know that the International 48 hours Convention adopted by that body in 1920 has not yet been ratified.

The militants in all unions can expose this bluff by seeing that resolutions go forward to the National Conferences of the unions and to the Trades Union Congress, demanding the organisation of struggle for the forty-hour week.

In the standing orders of the Trades Union Congress there is a clause authorising the General Council of the Trades Union Congress to call a special conference of the trade unions to consider what steps should be taken in the event of war breaking out.

The war situation develops with lightning-like rapidity, but the trade union leaders remain silent except now and then to interview the government to get war work accelerated (the Shipbuilding officials' visit to the Admiralty) and to instruct their members to load munitions.

In every union branch, at every union conference the question must be raised of stopping the production and transport of munitions to Japan, of organising mighty workers' demonstrations against the Japanese consulates and against the National Government—Japan's fellow bandit. The war issue is obviously a common issue that all the rank-and-file movements can co-operate upon.

Then there comes the issue of the unions and the fight for work. This involves the fight against the breaking-off of trade relations with the Soviet Union, the drive for national housing development, not by pious

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resolutions but by organised mass action with the unemployed workers. The same applies to the adoption of a common policy of struggle with regard to unemployment relief and the wiping out of the Means Test.

Lastly, there is the struggle to free the Meerut prisoners, sentenced to fiendish terms of imprisonment because they were working to organise the working class in powerful unions, to build a Communist Party in India and to place that party at the head of the national struggle for independence.

The British trade unionists have a heavy responsibility for those fiendish sentences.

It was their leaders who, under both Labour Government and National Government have worked incessantly to prevent the rank-and-file of the unions from protesting against the infamy of the Meerut prosecution. It will be for the rank-and-file movements to assist in developing the powerful movement in the unions and factories for the release of our Indian comrades.

But in order to work effectively on those questions which are common to all unions there must be frequent consultation between the various rank-and-file movements. Where those movements exist largely within the framework of one union, like the Busmen's movement and the Port workers' movement within the Transport and General Workers' Union, this is already being done.

But there is obviously clamant need for constant consultations between all rank-and-file movements with regard to carrying forward of a common policy in relation to the trade union movement as a whole.

The more those movements co-operate on those wider questions the more they will realise the necessity of linking up in a common opposition movement. They will learn from experience that a trade union opposition movement is necessary, not because the rank-and-file are in opposition to the leadership with regard to some immediate question, but because the leadership has passed over to permanent co-operation with the workers' enemies—the capitalist class, and without a permanent opposition movement there can be no successful resistance to the attacks on the workers' standard of life, let alone a successful struggle for a workers' way, which can only be a revolutionary way, out of the crisis.

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I.L.P. 'REVOLUTIONARY POLICY'—DISCUSSION

I.—Editorial Statement and 'Labour Monthly' Conference Announcement

It is urgently necessary to draw together the results of the present "revolutionary policy" discussion of left I.L.P'ers. The Easter Conference of the I.L.P. is now approaching. The decisions of this Conference will be of great importance for the membership of the I.L.P. and for the development of the working-class movement. The Bradford Conference only carried through the formal break with the Labour Party; the programme that was adopted showed yet little difference from the old reformist programme of the I.L.P. It is at the coming Easter Conference that the question of what is meant by revolutionary policy will have to be decided, and the revolutionary Marxist elements in the I.L.P. will have to take a definite stand.

What is the basic issue confronting the I.L.P., and especially the left-wing of the I.L.P.? It is necessary to state it perfectly frankly and with no beating about the bush. The issue that confronts the I.L.P. is the issue of

COMMUNISM, *i.e.*, UNION WITH THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY

as already expressed in tentative form in the resolutions of the Lancashire and London Divisions of the I.L.P.

The seriousness of the "revolutionary policy" of the I.L.P. depends on facing this issue.

Is there a "revolutionary policy" which is not Communist policy? Can there be a half-way house between Labourism and Communism? This is the question which every I.L.P. member has to consider and to determine the answer.

Three schools of thought reveal themselves in the present I.L.P. as shown in the discussion in these pages and in the I.L.P. organs.

First, the official line (N.A.C.), which seeks to combine the nominal acceptance of "revolution" and of "Marxism" with continued adherence in practice to bourgeois democracy ("capture of the national and local organs of government") and pacifism ("pacifist technique of revolution").

The closer this line is analysed, the closer it will be found to amount to Labour Party policy, as leading spokesmen of the Labour Party have themselves declared.

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Second, the left centrist line (Revolutionary Policy Committee), which at present declares acceptance of Communist policy in principle, but raises various objections in practice to Communism ("rigidity" of Communism, disagreement on special questions of tactics, "non-British" character of Communism, sectarian faults of Communist Party, reformist faults of Communist Party, &c.).

So far as these objections represent serious difficulties, they should be carefully and frankly discussed. The questions should be approached from an objective and political standpoint, and not from the very subjective and even personal approach sometimes shown, wholly unsuitable for serious political decisions (objections to particular Communist leaders, complaints of manners of Communists, &c.). Once there is agreement on the basic political platform, no secondary differences should be allowed to stand in the way of the great objective of union of the revolutionary forces in Britain.

Third, the revolutionary Marxist line, which is now beginning to find expression within the I.L.P. and to make a definite stand on the platform of the Communist International as the only consistent outcome of revolutionary policy.

We believe that the logic of events, no less than of the discussions in progress, will more and more convince all serious elements in the I.L.P. of the correctness of this line.

In order to assist the process of discussion and interchange of views, the LABOUR MONTHLY *is organising a*

DISCUSSION CONFERENCE ON REVOLUTIONARY POLICY

to be held on Saturday, March 19th, at The Friars' Hall, 237 Blackfriars Road, S.E.1. (See page opposite the Contents page for fuller details).

All workers interested, and especially all I.L.P'ers, are cordially invited to take part.

Discussion is needed on the urgent questions confronting the I.L.P. Easter Conference, on the common problems confronting all revolutionaries in the present situation in Britain, and to clear the points of difference expressed between left I.L.P'ers and Communists.

The controversies already developed show that special attention is needed on the question of revolutionary tactics and organisation—the rôle of the revolutionary party, the meaning of revolutionary mass work, the rôle of revolutionaries in the existing mass struggle, the question of discipline and of democratic centralism, the methods and organisation of the Communist International and of the Communist Party, &c. Experience shows that on these questions a wealth of misunderstanding still exists, often unconsciously absorbed by left I.L.P'ers from capitalist and social-democratic sources, e.g., concerning "Russian methods," "rigidity of discipline," "Moscow orders," &c.

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The history and development, programme, organisation and tactics of the Communist International should be carefully studied. These represent no arbitrary creation, but the outcome and quintessence of the experience of revolutionary Marxism and of the international working-class movement over many decades. The principles of Communism, not only of theory, but of tactics and organisation, were already worked out in their main lines by Marx and Engels in relation to the developing working-class movement in the leading countries, and are carried forward to-day by the Communist International, which derives in straight line from the left Marxist wing of the old pre-war Second International, into the epoch of imperialism and capitalist decline, of world-war and proletarian revolution. Whoever seeks seriously to realise revolutionary policy must set himself to understand these principles, the methods of struggle, the rôle of the party, the necessity of discipline, the necessity of a centralised International, the necessity of merciless warfare against all Right and Centrist weakenings of the fight.

In order to make clear the conditions of membership of the Communist International, we reprint for reference the Twenty-one Conditions of Admission to the Communist International, which were originally drawn up in 1920, *when a number of centrist parties were streaming towards the Communist International under the influence of the post-war crisis, but still with confused programmes and under opportunist leadership.*

The question of revolutionary mass work needs no less careful clearing. Here a very great confusion and vacillation is visible between simple reformism—and as a supposed alternative to reformism—falling into the pure gospel-preaching and disciple-gathering point of view of the propagandist sect. The understanding of the mass movement, that the advance to socialism is achieved, not through abstract propaganda and conversion, but through the class struggle, through the development of the mass struggle and of the conscious revolutionary party within it, and the consequent understanding of the rôle of revolutionaries in the immediate struggle and of the revolutionary significance of partial struggles, is the indispensable condition of effective revolutionary work in Britain to-day. All those concerned with these problems should study especially the Theses on Tactics of the Third Congress of the Communist International as the clearest guide to these questions.

The LABOUR MONTHLY *Discussion Conference on Revolutionary Policy will accordingly be called on, especially to concentrate upon the following types of questions :*

1. *In what does I.L.P. revolutionary policy differ from Communist policy?*
2. *Is there a Middle Policy between Labourism and Communism?*
3. *What are the next tasks of revolutionaries in the present situation in Britain?*

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4. *What is the path to the conquest of power? What is the rôle of the existing mass struggle in the development to the conquest of power?*
5. *What is revolutionary mass work? Is the fight for immediate demands reformist?*
6. *On what lines can be developed the revolutionary fight against Imperialist war.*
7. *What must be the rôle and structure of the revolutionary party of the working class?*
8. *Is unity of the revolutionary working class forces desirable? How can it best be achieved?*
9. *Can Communists realise their aims outside the Communist International?*

In the April issue of the LABOUR MONTHLY *a final summing-up of the Revolutionary Policy discussion, both in the pages of the* LABOUR MONTHLY *and at the Conference, will be printed, and the issues re-stated for the Easter Conference.*

Editor, LABOUR MONTHLY.

II.—The Twenty-One Conditions of Admission to the Communist International[1]

THE first Constituent Congress of the Communist International did not draw up precise conditions of admission to the Third International. At the moment of its convocation only Communist currents and tendencies were existent in the majority of countries.

The Second World Congress of the Communist International, however, assembles under different conditions. There are now in most countries not only Communist tendencies and groups, but definite Communist *Parties and Organisations*.

The Communist International more and more frequently receives applications from Parties and Groups that, but a short time ago, belonged to the Second International, and now seek to join the Third International without really being Communists. The Second International has completely collapsed, and the various intermediary factions and groups of the "centre" are trying to lean upon the growing Communist International, hoping at the same time, however, to preserve a certain

[1] Adopted at the Second Congress of the Communist International held in 1920.

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measure of "autonomy" that will enable them to pursue their old opportunist or "centrist" policy. The Communist International has become the fashion. The desire of these leading groups of the "centre" to join the Third International is indirect evidence of its influence on the majority of the class-conscious workers of the world, and that its power is strengthening every day. The Communist International consequently runs the risk of being weakened by the adhesion of wavering, luke-warm groups that have not as yet abandoned the ideology of the Second International.

It must be remembered that in some of the larger Parties (*i.e.*, in Italy, Norway, &c.) the majority of whose members adhere to the Communist attitude, there still remain considerable reformist and social-pacifist elements that await only the moment to revive in order to begin an active "sabotage" of the proletarian revolution, and thus give a new lease of life to the bourgeoisie and the Second International.

No Communist must forget the lesson of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. The Hungarian Communists paid dearly for their unity with the so-called Social-Democrats of the Left.

For these reasons the Second World Congress of the Communist International considers it essential to lay down definite conditions for the affiliation of new Parties, as well as to point out to Parties already affiliated the duties which affiliation involve.

The Second Congress rules that the conditions of affiliation to the Communist International shall be as follows:

1. General propaganda and agitation must be of a definite Communist character and correspond to the programme and decisions of the Third International. The Party Press must be edited by reliable Communists who have proved their loyalty to the cause of the proletarian revolution. The dictatorship of the proletariat must not be spoken of as a mere hackneyed formula. The facts of everyday life must be systematically recorded and interpreted by the Party Press in such a fashion as to make the necessity of proletarian dictatorship self-evident to every worker, soldier and peasant. All periodical and other publications of the Party must be under the control of the Central Executive of the Party, independently of whether the Party is legal or illegal. Wherever the adherents of the Third International can gain access and by whatever means of propaganda are at their disposal—in the columns of newspapers, at public meetings, within the trade unions and Co-operatives—it is essential that they denounce not only the capitalists, but also their allies, the reformists of every colour and shade.

2. Every organisation desiring to join the Communist International must be bound systematically and regularly to remove from all responsible

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positions (in the Party, Committee, Editorial Staff, Trade Union, Parliamentary Group, Co-operative Society, and Municipal Council) all reformists and supporters of the " centre " and to replace them by tried Communists, even at the risk of supplanting, for a time, " experienced " men by rank-and-file workers.

3. The class struggle in almost every country of Europe and America is reaching the threshold of civil war. Under such conditions the Communists can have no confidence in bourgeois laws. They should create everywhere a parallel illegal machinery which at the decisive moment will do its duty by the Party and in every way possible assist the revolution. In every country where, in consequence of martial law or other exceptional laws, the Communists are unable to carry on their work lawfully, a combination of legal and illegal work is absolutely necessary.

4. A persistent and systematic propaganda is necessary in the army, where Communist groups should be formed in every military unit. Wherever, owing to repressive legislation, agitation becomes legally impossible, it is necessary to conduct such agitation, illegally. Refusal to carry on or participate in such work should be considered as treason to the revolutionary cause and incompatible with affiliation to the Third International.

5. A systematic propaganda is necessary in the agricultural districts. The working class cannot achieve victory unless it gains the sympathy and support of the agricultural workers and unless other sections of the population are equally utilised. Communist work in the agricultural districts is of paramount importance at the present moment. It should be carried on by Communist workers of both town and country who have connections with the rural districts. To neglect this work or to leave it to untrustworthy semi-reformists is tantamount to renouncing the proletarian revolution.

6. All Parties desiring to join the Third International must renounce not only avowed social-patriotism, but the false and hypocritical social-pacifism as well. They must systematically demonstrate to the workers that without the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, neither International arbitration nor conferences regarding the limitation of armaments, nor the " democratic " reorganisation of the League of Nations will be capable of saving mankind from new imperialist wars.

7. Parties desirous of joining the Communist International must recognise the necessity of a complete and absolute rupture with reformism and the policy of the " centrists," and must advocate this rupture amongst the Party membership. Without this condition a consistent Communist policy is impossible. The Communist International unconditionally and

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peremptorily demands that such break takes place with the least possible delay. The Communist International cannot tolerate the suggestion that such avowed reformists as Turatti, Modigliani, Kautsky, Hillquit, Longuet, MacDonald, and others should be entitled to membership of the Third International. This would make the Third International merely a counterpart of the Second.

8. On the question of Colonies and oppressed nationalities, an especially distinct and clear line of conduct is necessary in the case of Parties in countries where the bourgeoisie possesses Colonies or oppresses other nationalities. All Parties belonging to the Third International shall be in duty bound to denounce without reservation the colonial policy of their respective imperialists, and to support, not in words only, but in deed, the movement for Colonial independence. They must demand the withdrawal of their imperialists from such colonies, cultivate among the workers of their own country a genuine fraternal attitude towards the working population of the Colonies and oppressed nationalities, and conduct a systematic propaganda in their own army against every semblance of oppression of the colonial population.

9. All Parties belonging to the Communist International must carry on a systematic and persistent Communist work in the Trade Unions, Co-operative Societies and other class organisations of the workers. It is necessary to form Communist groups within those organisations in order, by persistent and lasting work, to win them over to Communism. These groups must consistently expose the treachery of the social-patriots and the vacillation of the "centrists." These groups must be completely subordinated to the Party as a whole.

10. All Parties belonging to the Communist International are bound to conduct a relentless struggle against the Yellow Amsterdam "International" of Trade Unions. They must propagate insistently amongst the organised workers the necessity of breaking with the Amsterdam International and of joining up with the new Red International of Trade Unions and adhering to the Communist International.

11. Parties desiring to join the Third International must inspect their Parliamentary groups in order to remove therefrom all unreliable elements and must subordinate such groups to the direct control of the Party Executive. They must demand of their representatives that they shall devote their activities entirely to the interests of real revolutionary propaganda.

12. All Parties belonging to the Communist International should be based on the principle of democratic *centralisation*. In this acute period of civil war, the Communist Party will be able fully to discharge its duty only if it is thoroughly well organised, if it possesses an iron discipline,

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and if its Executive enjoys the confidence of the Party members, who are to endow the Executive with complete power and authority.

13. The Communist Parties operating in countries where Communist activity is legal should make a periodical inspection of their membership roll in order to eliminate the petty middle class elements which may penetrate the Party ranks.

14. Parties desiring to join the Communist International must render every possible assistance to the Soviet Republics in their struggles against counter-revolutionary forces. They should conduct an organised and definite propaganda to induce the workers to refuse to make or handle any kind of military equipment intended for use against the Soviet Republics, and should also carry on, by legal or illegal means, a propaganda among any troops sent against the Workers' Republics.

15. Parties which have hitherto stood upon the old Social-Democratic programmes must immediately draw up a new Communist Programme applying to the special conditions of their country and in accordance with the resolution of the Communist International. Such programme shall be endorsed by the next Congress of the Communist International or by its Executive Committee. In the event of the programme of any Party being rejected by the Executive Committee, the Party concerned shall have the right of appeal to the Congress of the Communist International.

16. Resolutions adopted by the Communist International and its Executive Committee are binding on all affiliated Parties. The Communist International, operating in a period of acute civil strife, must be centralised in a more effective manner than was the Second International. At the same time the Communist International and its Executive Committee must, in all spheres of their activity, have regard to the variety of conditions under which the different Parties have to work and struggle, and obligatory resolutions should be passed only on questions on which such obligatory resolutions are practical.

17. In conformity with the foregoing conditions, all Parties about to join the Third International must change or amend their names and be known as: The Communist Party of such-and-such country, section of the Third Communist International. This is more than a mere matter of name and form; it is a political question of great importance. The Communist International has declared war upon the whole capitalist system and the old Yellow Social-Democratic Parties. It is of vital importance that the workers should be able to distinguish clearly between the Communist Parties and the old official "Social-Democratic" and "Socialist" Parties, which have deserted the cause of the working class.

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18. All the leading Press organs of every Party are bound to publish the more important documents of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

19. All those Parties which have joined the Communist International, as well as those which have expressed a desire to do so, are obliged, as rapidly as possible, and in no case later than four months after the Second Congress of the Communist International, to convene a special Congress in order to discuss these conditions. In addition to this, the Executive Committee of these Parties should take care to acquaint all the local organisations with the regulations of the Second Congress.

20. All those Parties which at the present time are willing to join the Third International, but have so far not changed their tactics in any radical manner, should, prior to joining the Third International, take care that not less than two-thirds of their Committee members and of all their central institutions consist of comrades who have made an open and definite declaration prior to the convening of the Second Congress, as to their desire that the Party should affiliate to the Third International. Exceptions are permitted only with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Third International. The Executive Committee has the right to make an exception also for the representatives of the "centre," as mentioned in paragraph 7.

21. Those members of the Party who reject the conditions and the theses of the Third International are liable to be excluded from the Party. This applies particularly to delegates at the special Congress of the Party.

III.—The Marxism of the I.L.P.

By BOB McILHONE

> Imperialist war and the difficulties which have been facing the capitalist class have been turning many I.L.P'ers to a more serious and deep examination of their attitude than ever before, and they say now, honestly, that in this new view of the situation their past activities have been on the wrong lines and they are seeking the correct policy and consequent tactic, through which they can most usefully take their part in the struggle for workers' power.
>
> (Jack Gaster, LABOUR MONTHLY, January, 1933.)

THE great "awakening" of the membership of the I.L.P. to activity and to revolutionary theory is part of the upward movement of the whole working class. The accentuation of the crisis, one feature of which is the upward surge of the masses, makes it imperative that in the ranks of the revolutionary movement, there should

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be a strengthening of Marxism-Leninism. More and more attention must be devoted to the explanation of the fundamental principles of Marx and Lenin. At the same time the growing bankruptcy of Reformism has compelled the " left-Reformists " to shift their ground, to re-model their " constitution " and to appear before the masses in the garb of " Marxism."

This process itself is an indication of the urgency with which revolutionary Marxism in this and other countries is faced with the need to fight against the distortions of Marxism and Leninism. It is also an indication of the fact that *among the masses* Marxism-Leninism is conquering Reformism, and side by side with the mass struggles, the workers are learning *through their own experience* that Marxism-Leninism is *not abstract theory*, but a weapon for the solution of their daily problems. It is not without significance that on the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Karl Marx, Hitler is compelled to shout in anger to the hungry German masses, " Marxism in Germany will be destroyed." The basic significance of the fiftieth anniversary of Marx's death is that his principles, brought up to date and completed by Lenin in the new period of proletarian revolutions, are now fully justified before the masses by the existence of the Soviet Union and the Communist International.

Jack Gaster writing in the January LABOUR MONTHLY in support of the position of the I.L.P., is naive enough not only to have the readers of the LABOUR MONTHLY " forget " the " past " character of the I.L.P. (" most of members of the I.L.P. were steeped in the muddled theories of reformism "—" their past activities have been on the wrong lines "), and to " forgive " this because, after all, the leaders and members may be " sincere," but also wants to wipe out the entire experience of the working class since the Paris Commune, nay, since the publication of Marx's " Communist Manifesto."

He sees that the sudden " awakening " of the I.L.P. to Marxism is a result of the crisis. (" Imperialist war and the difficulties which have been facing the capitalist class "—not the difficulties facing the working class !) The past is best characterised by Maxton himself, who spoke in Sheffield of his " 27 years of failure."

But all of the experiences of the working class since the beginning of the century, especially the war and post-war experiences, the collapse of the Second International, the birth of the Soviet Union, the growth and consolidation of the Communist International, the existence of a revolutionary party in Britain, with all the best experience of the British working class embodied in it, the C.P.G.B., all this does not require objective consideration. The I.L.P. is " sincere," the " constitution has been changed," we are now a party based on the class struggle—a Marxist Party, though not necessarily a Leninist Party.

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It is of no apparent significance that the collapse of the Second International ("the downfall of social opportunism"—Lenin), the creation of the Soviet Government, then, in 1914-18 decided the question *once and for all* of whether the working class must follow the Moscow road, or the road of social-democracy to achieve emancipation. It is of no significance to the new "Marxians," that in Germany at the moment the *results* of Right and Left Reformism are seen in the naked Fascist dictatorship, or that in Russia, the *results* of revolutionary Marxism are seen in the steady progress to Socialism. It is naive to ask us to forget all this and let the I.L.P. start over again.

But inside the I.L.P., as outside in the ranks of the organised working class there is a really sincere striving to understand Marxism-Leninism. To blind and confuse these workers who are really "honestly" trying to poke their noses "between the covers of the works of Marx and Lenin" is the particular task which some of the leaders of the new Revolutionary Policy Committee have set themselves. The contempt for the "dead economist" (Marx) for the "working class leader" (Lenin) expressed by Gaster is sufficient to indicate that he is no more "sincere" in wanting to understand Marxism and Leninism than the leadership he defends in the National Administrative Council of the I.L.P.

What is the central experience of the revolutions since the Paris Commune, the 62nd anniversary of which will take place this month? Lenin, closely studying the analysis made by Marx of the Commune declared that the Paris Commune did not have a strongly-welded leadership armed with Marxist theory and based on the masses of the people. The leadership of the Commune, on the one hand Blanqui, inclined to "putchism," and on the other, the petty-bourgeois Proudhonites, soaked in "democracy," between them were unable to give the Commune this necessary direction, this led to the committing of a series of tactical blunders which finally resulted in the downfall of the Commune and the victory of the reaction.

Lenin, from this experience, said:

> Strict centralisation and leadership is needed within the party of the proletariat. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a stubborn struggle—with or without bloodshed—aggressive or peaceful—against the power of the traditions of the old society, the power of habits among millions and tens of millions, the most terrible power of all. Without a party, strong and inured in struggle, without a party enjoying the confidence of all that is honest in the given class, without a party capable of following the moods of the masses and influencing them—it is impossible to carry on such a struggle successfully.
>
> (*Left-wing Communism.*)

It is true that for this task Lenin did not have in mind the I.L.P. which earlier he had described tersely as "Independent only of Socialism."

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Gaster ignores all this experience, and places before the working class the perspective in " the struggle for power " that " there will be no room for two revolutionary parties each claiming the leadership and *we are not over-concerned* as to whether eventually that Party is the I.L.P. or the Communist Party. . . ." (My italics.) What a " Marxist " who is " not over-concerned " on the central question of the revolution, who cannot " bury his nose " in Marx and Lenin in order to study the experience of past revolutions the better to successfully lead the coming revolutions!

Gaster also crudely distorts Leninism, and necessarily Marxism (really because he does not understand the theories and principles of Marx and Lenin), when he says that: " If being a Marxist organisation implies the general acceptance of his interpretations of history, analysis of capitalism and its necessary consequence for the workers then obviously the I.L.P. must be a Marxist Party. If to be a Leninist means the complete acceptance of Lenin's analysis of Marxism and his tactics as the ' last word ' then the I.L.P. cannot be a Leninist body in the strict sense of the term, but to understand the lessons that Lenin taught is essential." One might be forgiven even by Gaster himself if one forgot to be " polite " and described this as the height of petty-bourgeois balderdash. Fortunately we have not forgotten how to be " polite."

Stalin describes Leninism as the Marxism of the period of Imperialism. This terse description is not convincing enough to the Gaster and Maxtonian-Marxians. In the Derby branch of the I.L.P., where the writer recently had a very enjoyable discussion with the members on a number of important questions of the revolution arising from a report on the 12th Communist Congress, two of the members declared their " preparedness " to accept Lenin, but not fully Marx, who " in some aspects " was " out of date." It is thus evident that the exact relation of the theories of Lenin to Marxism are not fully understood and that more explanation is needed in the columns of the LABOUR MONTHLY on this aspect of the question.

Take, for instance, the central question which we have dealt with above, the existence of a centrally directed party. Any one claiming adhesion to Marxism and Leninism (even if not " all " the latter!) who does not understand that *no proletarian* revolution is successful without a mass Communist Party, closely connected with the masses (so, because the masses trust it), through their own experience coming to realise that the party which can defend the daily interests of the workers is fully capable of defending and guiding the masses in the final struggle, the Marxist who does not know this, if he is anxious to learn, had better start to " dig his nose " into the covers of Lenin's and Marx's works.

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The I.L.P. have not only worked out a "Marxist" constitution for their Party, but have worked out a Marxist recipe for the "seizure" of workers' power. This is the "united front with all militant working class organisations" (not the masses—B.McI.) "possibly building upon specific issues, but eventually developing into Workers' Councils, which would be an instrument for the capture of power and for the maintenance of that workers' dictatorship which the transition period would demand."

According to this formula, there are two things necessary for the "seizure of power" (1932 brand), (1) Workers' Councils and (2) class consciousness. Nothing else. The perspective is therefore that the "united front must be developed by the active co-operation of all comrades in the parties concerned" (Gaster). (Again not the masses.—B.McI.) These will come together, and their activity will be to awaken the workers to their class-strength and when the workers have been sufficiently imbued with the sense of their class position then and only then will it be possible to "seize power." It must be obvious to all thinking workers in the I.L.P. and outside that this recipe is dangerous, not to capitalism, but to the development of the mass movement *against* capitalism.

The united front is not a unity of parties or organisations. The united front is a unity of the masses of Communist and Reformist workers against the attacks of capitalism, against Reformism, Fascism and the war. The left Manifesto to the Internationals is a repetition of history. In a previous "crisis" the left Social-Democrats came together to "unite" the working class. We saw where they went—back into the Second International. The Communist International will be able to discuss "unity" but it will be unity with the masses against the reformists and the capitalists, whose agents they are.

The rank-and-file of the I.L.P. must look past Maxton and Gaster if they wish to find the true path, the path indicated long since by Marx and Lenin, the path taken by the Russian Revolution, the path which led to the establishment of the greatest revolutionary party of all times, the Communist International, the path which will finally lead to the revolutionary way out of the crisis in all capitalist countries.

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